HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

MOURRET-THOMPSON

VOLUME TWO

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# A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

BY

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TRANSLATED BY

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#### **PREFACE**

THE fourth and fifth centuries of our era were dominated by two momentous facts: the Roman Empire, repeatedly attacked by the barbarians and weighed down by its own corruption, crumbled into ruin and in its fall dragged down pagan idolatry; but the Catholic Church, purified by persecution and enriched by whatever it retained that was good and true and beautiful in the inheritance of the Greco-Roman world, organized to civilize the barbarian world.

The account of the first of these two facts supplies the general setting of our history. We see the last Roman emperors, in their endeavor to save the Empire, appeal to the aid of various forces: Constantine invokes the help of Christianity; Constantius relies upon heresy; Julian the Apostate has recourse to paganism; Theodosius returns to Constantine's design.

The second fact was a deeper undertaking, one less merely external. Men of learning and virtue, whom posterity would call the Fathers of the Church, sought to develop the doctrinal and moral teaching and the spiritual life of Christianity. So fruitful was their influence that their name has been given to the two centuries which glory in their labors. By contrast with the age of the martyrs preceding them, the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era are commonly spoken of as the age of the Church Fathers.

That period did not embrace all the great men on whom Christians bestow this glorious title. Their long series goes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> They were called "Fathers of the Church" as early as the fifth century.

back to St. Clement of Rome, who lived in the time of the Apostles, and continues to St. Bernard, who illumined the twelfth century. But the group of ecclesiastical writers living during the period between the Edict of Milan and the fall of the Empire is distinguished by certain marks that set them apart in the history of Christianity.

First, the patristic literature of the fourth and fifth centuries is especially abundant, and in every domain is displayed with tireless activity. Apologetics, polemics, Scriptural exegesis, dogmatic theology, the science of morals, asceticism, history, and sacred poetry were cultivated with like earnestness and success. Following the peace of Constantine, with the fear of persecution definitely removed and the material life of Christian society apparently secure, cultivated minds turned with eager curiosity to the great religious speculations that were elaborated by the School of Alexandria. Their ambition was to employ the language and philosophical ideas of Greek learning in the formulation of the lofty mysteries of the faith. With greater zest at Alexandria, a more positive method at Antioch, and a more traditional tendency in Cappadocia, the Fathers of the East were outstanding leaders in this movement of religious scholarship. The full development of Latin activity came only later and in a more practical realm of ideas.

In the East such men as Athanasius, Basil, the Gregories, and the Cyrils explored the notion of divine substance and worked out a science of God and of Christ; in the West a science of man and the Church was evolved by scholars like Ambrose, Jerome, Hilary, and Augustine, passionately devoted to questions of morality and discipline. Moreover, a broad current of ideas circulated between the Greek and the Latin world. St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, and St. Hilary were their providential bonds of union; St. Augustine built them

into a mighty synthesis. Through him the whole intellectual work of antiquity is transmitted to the Middle Ages and to modern times.<sup>2</sup>

The patrology of the fourth and fifth centuries had this special feature: it was more universal than any other movement of Christian learning. Previous to St. Athanasius, religious literature, which at first had been Jewish and then Alexandrian, was almost exclusively Eastern; after St. Augustine its chief development is in the West; during the classical period of the Fathers, it radiates everywhere.

Such being the case, the influence of the Fathers of this epoch was immense and beyond comparison with the influence of the groups of writers who preceded or who followed them. From their labors the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and grace come forth almost fully elucidated. The great councils of this period had simply, by virtue of their supreme authority, to promulgate the infallible definitions of those doctrines. The subtlest sophisms of heresy are clearly discerned by the Fathers. With regard to the principal errors that may attack the idea of God, the divinity of Christ, and the conditions of man's salvation, they furnish replies that, as a whole, can be regarded as final.

The "period of the Fathers" has also been called the "period of the great heresies." "There must be heresies," said the Apostle. There had to be, if only to stir the intellectual activity of the Church. St. Hilary begins his immortal treatise *On the Trinity* by saying that heresy spurred his mind. "The errors

<sup>2 &</sup>quot;Whoever would become an able theologian and a sound exegete should read the Fathers again and again. In a single one of their writings he will often find more of the principles and early vigor of Christianity than in several volumes of recent interpreters . . . because those great men were nourished upon this wheat of the elect, this pure substance of religion, and because, as they were filled with that primitive spirit which they received more directly and abundantly from the very source, often what they write is more nourishing than what was later elaborated." Bossuet, Défense de la tradition et des saints Pères, Part I, bk. 4, chap. 18.

of heretics and blasphemers force us to scale perilous heights, to speak unutterable words." <sup>3</sup> Heresies had to be, since God, desiring the development of His Church to the end of time, seems to will that it should always develop by struggle. In the era of bloody persecutions, the first pontiffs by their martyrdom cemented the movement of expansion and organization of the early Church. The doctors following them endured another sort of martyrdom, defending against sophistry and blasphemies and in the face of persecution, insult, and calumny, the Church which was attacked in its essential dogmas and calumniated in its purest morality. But from this crisis they saw Catholic doctrine arise triumphant, elucidated, and strengthened.

The strife against actual heresies was not the sole cause for the grief of those venerable Fathers. In the tendencies of some Eastern doctors, in the political acts of certain emperors, and in the jealous attitude of peoples grouped about Constantinople, they could foresee the remote causes of a great schism. Yet, although their souls groaned, their faith was never shaken.

Though all the dissident sects, in schism as in heresy, agreed on one point—hatred for the Roman Church—the latter remained steadfast in adherence to its earliest traditions and by its generosity, as in the time of Clement of Rome, ever deserved to be called the one "that presides over the charity." Whereas each of these sects assumed the name of its leader or of the locality where it was born, the common voice of all peoples reserved the name Catholic Church for that one group which was connected with Rome. While Arians, Donatists, Nestorians, and Eutychians divided and subdivided, forming independent branches, the Church, faithfully united to the Roman pontiffs, tightened the bonds of its hierarchy. The Roman Church, in its discipline as in its doctrine, was indeed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> St. Hilary, On the Trinity, II, 2. (Nicene Fathers, 2d series, IX, 52.)

the Church to which Christ foretold that "the gates of hell would not prevail against it."

The progress of events that we recount in the present volume has three phases, dividing the work into as many parts.

From 313 to 379, under emperors who now protect it and now persecute it, the Church affirms at Nicaea the contested points of its faith, and the Fathers energetically defend that faith, whether against the final assaults of pagan error or against the attacks of that half-pagan error, the doctrine of Arius. It is the end of paganism.

From 379 to 395, while Theodosius resumes and develops the protective policy of Constantine, the Fathers profit from the imperial good will to combat and expose the most varied and subtle forms of heresy. This is the triumph of Christianity as the State religion.

From 395 to 476, while Constantinople's rivalry of Rome prepares the way for the future schism of the East and while successive barbarian assaults weaken the Empire of the West, the Church enjoys a greater freedom from imperial tutelage and, relying only upon her own power for the defense of her doctrine and for the conversion of new peoples, faces the future with confidence.

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#### A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

#### VOLUME II

I. THE END OF PAGANISM

II. CATHOLICISM THE STATE RELIGION

III. THE CHURCH FREED FROM THE EMPIRE

## PART I THE END OF PAGANISM

#### CHAPTER I

#### The Arian Heresy

#### Condition of Paganism

In 313 paganism appeared to be mortally stricken. Euhemerus' criticism, the religious skepticism of pagan philosophers and poets, and the unanswerable objections by apologists of Christianity had weakened it radically as a belief. And it seemed that the Edict of Milan ruined it as a political institution. But the pagan spirit survived in private practices and in the public mind.

Popular superstitions were increasing. The Delphic oracle was in full activity in 325. It was Constantine who moved the the tripod of the Pythoness to Constantinople.¹ Licinius consulted Apollo.² When he turned against Constantine shortly after the Edict of Milan, on the march against his rival he was accompanied by magicians and had the images of the gods carried at the head of his legions. Upon the whole, perhaps never were divination, magic, and incantations more widespread than in the first part of the fourth century. Although, under the influence of Christianity, a few temples of the Greco-Roman religion had been razed or closed, the worship of Oriental divinities spread prodigiously in the West. An essential part of that worship was composed of magic, prophecy, charms, and very odd superstitions.³ These practices grew more numerous in the private life of the family. A

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 54; Zosimus, Historia romana, II, 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History, I, 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For a list of these curious practices, see Mommsen and Marquardt's Manuel des antiquités romaines, French trans., XII, 110-138,

fourth century inscription, found at Capua, gives us a glimpse of pagan holy days, which remained in vigor at that period in country districts: purification processions along the river banks, offerings of roses in memory of the manes, and vows to the genii of the fields accompanied the work of the harvest.<sup>4</sup> So deeply had these customs entered into the people's habits that even pious Christians had difficulty in refraining from them. "Thus when Fructuosus, Augurius, and Eulogius were burned at the stake, their friends, who came to collect the martyrs' ashes, sprinkled them with wine, 'to extinguish the fire which was still burning,' say the Acts, but more probably as a survival of the libations used by the ancients after the cremation of corpses," <sup>5</sup>

The philosophers and writers no longer believed in the Homeric gods or in those of ancient Rome, but, under the name of Hellenism, most of them professed a syncretism in which all the religious speculations of the East were mingled with those of Greece and Rome. Their speculative paganism was, in short, merely a transposition of the practical, popular paganism into the world of ideas.<sup>6</sup>

Public life still retained the pagan elements that had largely constituted it. We have already seen how Constantine, though converted to Christianity, was unable to give up the title of supreme pontiff. This title, closely bound up with that of emperor, placed him at the head of the Roman religion and

<sup>4</sup> Corpus inscriptionum latinarum, X, 3792.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Allard, *Julien l'Apostat*, I, 82 f. Only water would have been needed for extinguishing the fire; a different significance seemed to be connected with the use of wine.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> In the regions which border the Mediterranean or which are in direct communication with it by the Rhone River, a large number of inscriptions (discovered at Nimes, Vence, Orange, Vaison, Valence, Lyons, etc.) refer to local divinities, more or less connected with the worship of the forces of nature, identified with the Roman gods that most closely resemble them. Cf. Corpus inscriptionum latinarum, XII, 43, 357, 358, 1222, 1311, 1567, 1569, 1744, 1745, 1782, 3096–3102, 4323, 4329, 5687, 5864, 5953.

made him a member of all the sacerdotal colleges.<sup>7</sup> The most Christian of his successors could not avoid the office. No doubt they tried to use this disciplinary power in a way contrary to the interests of idolatry. But the fact is significant that they could lessen the influence of paganism only by acting as its chief pontiffs.<sup>8</sup>

In the provinces municipal officers authorize special devotions to the city divinities; they interpret evil omens and regulate the manner of expiation. At the close of the fifth century, a vestal virgin is condemned for violation of her yow and is buried alive, by order of the college of pontiffs which was presided over by the prefect. In many cities and villages inscriptions have been discovered showing that municipal offices and sacerdotal functions were inseparable. The title of flamen perpetuus, on the monuments discovered in Africa, is always joined with that of curator reipublicae; 10 and numerous indications prove that the like custom prevailed in Gaul, Spain, and Britain. The same fact is true of the East, especially of Palestine. After the last revolts of the Jews, the Romans did everything possible to establish pagan civilization there. Furthermore, the penetration of paganism into Palestine was favored by the nearness of Arabia and a closer contact with Phenicia to the north and the ancient country of the Philistines to the southwest. Yet in general the countries of the East had been more affected by Christian influence than

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mourret, History of the Catholic Church, I, 496.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Van Dale's opinion (Dissert. antiq., II, 1 f), which is timidly followed by Aubé (De Constantino imperatore pontifice maximo) and by Bouché-Leclercq (Les Pontifes de l'ancienne Rome, pp. 406 f.), is that the sovereign pontificate of Constantine and his successors gave them the same power over the Christian religion as the pagan emperors had over the ancient religion. But this view is not tenable. No Christian writer gave Constantine the title of pontiff. See Allard, Julien l'Apostat, I, 354 f.

<sup>9</sup> Allard, op. cit., I, 69 f.

<sup>10</sup> Renier, Mélanges d'épigraphie, p. 45; Rossi, Bulletino di archeologia cristiana, 1878, p. 29; Allard, op. cit., I, 74 f.

had those of the West, especially because of the large number of monasteries in the eastern part of the Empire.

On the other hand, although pagan ideas and customs continued in private practices and public institutions, the purity of Christian faith and morals notably weakened. Once the favor of government was on the side of Christianity, ambitious men became Christians out of self-interest, and weak men simply followed their example. Ecclesiastical writers of the time deplore the large number of the "half-converted," who had only a tinge of Christianity and with it mingled numberless pagan prepossessions.

In either case a large number of men seemed ready to accept a doctrine that offered itself to them as a semi-paganism or a diluted Christianity.

Already several heresies owed their success principally to this equivocal character. Gnosticism, semi-Judaic in the beginning, little by little became semi-pagan; but it split into countless sects. At the same time Montanism likewise spread and divided into several parties. Mithraism and the various schools connected with the Neoplatonic doctrines were too indefinite. Manichaeism was not yet precise and popularized. None of these sects had then at its head a man of power, able to stir the populace by his eloquence, to disconcert his opponents by his sophistry, to procure the support of those in high station by his scheming, or to gather about him, by the seduction of his deportment and the apparent austerity of his life, a nucleus of followers devoted to his undertaking.

Such a leader came. It was Arius. From all the doctrines around him he took the elements of his theory of the Word inferior to God and the first creature of the world, and cleverly set forth this theory in clear and precise terms which, by easily impressing the memory, succeeded in captivating the will. In the words of a keen-sighted historian of early Christian theology, "Arius accomplished a sort of rational recon-

ciliation between Eastern Gnosticism, Platonic philosophy, and Jewish theology." <sup>11</sup> St. Athanasius would demonstrate that its logical result was pagan polytheism. But the exceptional importance of the Arian heresy in the history of the Church obliges us to set it forth in detail, tracing it back to its early beginning.

#### Arianism

Like Protestantism in the sixteenth century and revolutionary philosophism in the eighteenth, so Arianism in the fourth century was one of those central errors which, after condensing in themselves nearly all the errors of their time, become a prolific source of new errors. The Arian heresy, by affirming that the Word is a mere creature, was connected with the numerous Trinitarian and Christological heresies of the first three centuries. It soon led to Apollinarianism, Pelagianism, and Nestorianism as its legitimate offispring.

Arius and his adherents—in this followed by many historians—always called the great School of Antioch their cradle, and a holy martyr priest, Lucian, their father.<sup>12</sup> But their origin is not at all so simple as that.

#### Paul of Samosata

The teachers of the School of Antioch had always been distinguished by their sound reasoning and positive methods, and readily became attached to Aristotelianism.<sup>13</sup> Sometimes this attitude placed them in opposition to the doctors of Alexandria, who were more accustomed to soar in the lofty realms of Platonic metaphysics. Therein did not lie the danger. One

<sup>11</sup> Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, III, 199.

<sup>12</sup> See Batiffol, Étude d'hagiographie arienne, la Passion de saint Lucien d'Antioche, in the report of the Congrés scientifique des catholiques of 1891, II, 181–186. Cf. Analecta bollandiana, XI, 471.

<sup>18</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 437.

School was the more ardent, the other the more prudent; they seemed made to complement each other and to offer the world an integral exposition of Catholic doctrine in the full magnificence of its aspects and the full rigor of its dogmas. But a man of subtle mind, unbounded ambition, and a spirit disposed to intrigue and cabal, Paul of Samosata, did everything possible to pervert the theological movement of the School of Antioch.<sup>14</sup> He declared that he was prompted by a desire to conserve in the idea of God that dignity which belongs to Him. The more effectively to reconcile the doctrines of Christianity with reason, and especially to prevent the idea of the divine unity and simplicity from being harmed by any admission of a strictly so-called generation in God, Paul of Samosata considered the Word as an impersonal being, an attribute, not distinct from the Father. He regarded Christ merely as a man in whom the divine Word had dwelt and acted.

#### St. Lucian

One of Paul's disciples, an Antioch priest named Lucian, seduced by the lofty views on which the master claimed to rest his teaching, for a while became Paul's eloquent defender. For this reason he was excommunicated by his bishop. We do not know when or how he repudiated the false doctrines of Paul of Samosata. We know merely that he was received back into the Church of Antioch, that he there acquired considerable influence, and that he became famous by the publication of a corrected text of the Septuagint. In fine, his memory was publicly venerated after his glorious martyrdom under Emperor Maximinus.

"We have but few remains of the works of Lucian.15 The Eusebian Council held at Antioch in the year 341 ascribed to him

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem, I, 436 ff.

<sup>15</sup> They are collected in Routh, Reliquiae sacrae, 2d. ed., IV, 1-17.

a symbol the text of which has been preserved by St. Athanasius, and which betrays an intentional lack of dogmatic precision; but its authenticity is very doubtful." <sup>16</sup>

Lucian's disciples (Eusebius of Nicomedia, Leontius of Antioch, Theognis of Nicaea, and even Arius), who were fond of calling themselves "Collucianists," attributed the essential elements of their doctrines to him. As the Origenists did with regard to their master, so these too subjected the ideas of the holy martyr to exaggeration and distortion. It is noteworthy that St. Athanasius, so prompt in challenging whatever was connected with Arianism, never attacked Lucian. Furthermore, the Creed which the semi-Arians declared to be his, except for the omission of the word *homoousios*—which omission is readily explained before the definition of the Nicene Council—is a strictly orthodox profession of faith.<sup>17</sup>

Yet, since St. Alexander bishop of Alexandria clearly regards him as partly responsible for the development of Arianism, we may suppose that Lucian, probably for the purpose of reacting against the modalism of Sabellius, was not firm enough in maintaining the dogma of the unity of God. With his lively and daring mind, he must have framed, for the explanation of the Trinity, some venturesome hypothesis that more or less openly favored Adoptionism. His followers made unsound use of the theory.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> On January 7, 387 (the feast of St. Lucian) St. John Chrysostom delivered a panegyric on St. Lucian. But he made no reference to the saint's errors.

<sup>18</sup> St. Epiphanius, in his Ancoratus, chap. 43 (P. G., XLI, 817), says that Lucian denied that Christ had a human intellect. But probably this erroneous doctrine should rather be attributed to Lucian's disciples. We know that the doctrinal criticism of St. Epiphanius is generally marked by severity. Baronius (Annales, A. D. 311, no. 12; A. D. 318, no. 75) tries to free Lucian from every suspicion of heresy; but he has to acknowledge that Lucian, in his writings against the Sabellians, makes use of incorrect expressions. On Lucian of Antioch and his theological doctrine, see Gwatkin, The Arian Controversy, pp. 18 ff.; Harnack, art. "Antiocherische Schule" in Realencyklopädie, I, 591-595; Kattenbusch, Das apostolische Symbol,

#### Arius

In the number of those followers was a man considerably older than most of his fellow disciples. 19 His imposing appearance, strict morality, and brilliant, agile mind at that period exercised an ascendency over those about him. It was Arius. He was born in Libya about the middle of the third century. His contemporaries describe him as being tall and thin, in character stubborn and turbulent. At first he was involved in the Meletian Schism, but later on left it abruptly. In 302 Bishop Peter of Alexandria ordained him deacon, but soon afterwards had to break with him. He even excommunicated him. After Bishop Peter's martyrdom (November 25, 310),<sup>20</sup> Arius became a party to intrigues which are variously related by historians, according to their sympathies. The Arian Philostorgius says that Arius decided the election of Alexander by turning over to the latter the support of those who intended voting for himself. Others, on the contrary, accuse Arius of plotting for the episcopal dignity and of nursing against his successful rival the rancor of his ungratified ambition.21

Arius seems to have been a man of endless resources. He

I, 255 f., 266 f.; II, 202 f., 739; Hefele, Councils, I, 237 f.; Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 21 f. The most reasonable conclusion, based on the various studies which have been published upon this subject, is that St. Lucian of Antioch was one of those teachers who are quick to set forth most original hypotheses in their teaching, who at times sail close to heresy in their expressions, but who always remain orthodox at heart. In this way we can explain the Arians' claims, St. Alexander's insinuations, St. Epiphanius' declarations, and also the veneration of the Church for the memory of St. Lucian, the praise bestowed on him by St. Chrysostom, and the discreet respect which St. Athanasius always maintained towards him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> St. Epiphanius, speaking of Arius in connection with Alexander's election to the see of Alexandria in 311, calls him an old man. Historians reckon his age at that time as about sixty years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 478.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Le Bachelet, art. "Arius" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1780.

was an adept in Aristotelian dialectics and had no equal, it was said, in the art of handling syllogisms. His remarkable qualities of mind led to his being placed, immediately after his ordination to the priesthood, at the head of a parish church in a district of Alexandria called Baucalis.<sup>22</sup> And he was appointed to expound the Sacred Scriptures.

About 310, after Arius had been filling these two offices for eight years, the holy bishop of Alexandria was grieved to learn that strange doctrines were circulating among his clergy and people regarding the adorable Person of the Son of God. Some men, so it was reported, were maintaining that the second Person of the Trinity did not exist from all eternity. that the Son of God was merely the firstborn of created men. Assertions like these were a matter of grave concern. Men who spoke thus regarded the Incarnation and Redemption, adorable mysteries of a God that became man and died for us, as nothing more than vain fancies; the economy of salvation was broken; the abyss, opened by pagan philosophers between wretched mankind and the inaccessible Divinity, again vawned as formidable as in ancient times; and the world was no farther advanced after the preaching of the Gospel than before the coming of the Savior.

Soon it became known that the one who was spreading this doctrine was none other than the pastor of Baucalis. Alexander sent for him, spoke to him with every consideration due to his learning and good fame, and in a fatherly way urged him to discontinue sermons that profoundly disturbed the faith of the people. At least such is the force of Sozomen's account,<sup>23</sup> which agrees with the assertions of St. Epiphanius.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> St. Epiphanius, *Haereses*, LXIX, I. Hence it is evident that the city of Alexandria was at that time divided into parishes which were in charge of what today we call pastors.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Sozomen says that "Alexander held Arius in high repute" and that some people "blamed Alexander for not opposing opinions which seemed at variance with the faith." Sozomen, bk. 1, chap. 15.

Arius replied with subtle arguments and ambiguous words. Cleverly mixing what belongs to Christ's human nature with what belongs to His divinity, he succeeded in quieting the bishop's conscience.<sup>24</sup>

#### Arianism at Alexandria

But the conflict soon broke out with violence. One day Alexander, purposing to warn his hearers against the poison of the false doctrines that had been pointed out to him, was preaching on the mystery of the Holy Trinity, forcibly insisting upon God's essential unity. Arius, knowing he would be seconded by several persons in the congregation, boldly began to speak. Indignantly he protested against a doctrine which, he said, repeated the error of Sabellius, by confusing the three divine Persons. "If the Father begot the Son," he said, "he that was begotten had a beginning of existence; and from this it is evident that there was a time when the Son was not." 25 The heresiarch's move was extremely clever. The accused boldly made himself the accuser, the sophistical but clear and vigorous language he employed in expressing his doctrine, was of a sort to impress the hearers while disconcerting the preacher. The meeting broke up in tumult.

"Arius would certainly not have created so much disturbance in the minds of the people, had he not found in Alexandria a field well prepared to receive this theory of subordination, even so far back as the time of Origen. A certain hostility had been created against the theology of equality (the doctrine of the equality of the Son with the Father), which was taught by Theognostus, Pierius, and Bishop Peter, and now anew by Bishop Alexander. The representa-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Philostorgius and Eusebius do not mention this first conference between Alexander and Arius. But their silence does not outweigh the explicit assertions of Sozomen

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, I, 5 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., II, 3).

tives of the old Alexandrian tendency naturally linked themselves with pleasure to Arius; and thus it was that in later times the Arians earnestly appealed to the authority of Origen." <sup>26</sup>

The baleful tendency, however, can be traced back to a still earlier origin. It comes from a principle of pagan philosophy, which Philo did not eliminate from his system and which thus passed into the Alexandrian School. Ancient philosophy could not comprehend the creation of the world by God. God's supreme perfection prevented His entering into direct relation with the world; nature is too weak to sustain the immediate action of the Divinity. God could not create or act upon His creature except through an intermediary. In Philo's explanation, this intermediary is the Word or *Logos*, necessarily unequal to the supreme God. Such a concept not only contradicts the Bible and the Gospel, it is also self-contradictory. If the Word is a creature, how could God be in direct relationship with it? But a shifting and dividing of the problem gave the illusion that it was solved. The theory was favorably received by minds imbued with pagan philosophy. And the new doctrine seduced weak Christians. By lessening the majesty of the victim of Calvary, and hence the rigor of divine justice and the horror of sin, this new teaching was a sort of deliverance for sensual and easy-going souls.

#### St. Athanasius

Because of the ease with which it spread and the fundamental character of its essential errors, the danger of the doctrine preached by Arius was one of the most formidable that had menaced the Church. At the very first Bishop Alexander seems not to have grasped its full import.<sup>27</sup> But at the Bishop's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Hefele, Councils, I, 239.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> This conclusion seems evident from Socrates' account, loc. cit.

side Providence placed a young man of clear, sharp mind, upright soul, and strong will, the deacon Athanasius. He was born at Alexandria in 295.<sup>28</sup> Educated from childhood in profane and sacred letters, he entered the ranks of the clergy and for six years exercised the office of lector. Then the bishop of Alexandria called him to the diaconate and appointed him his secretary. Athanasius was short and thin; his appearance was ridiculed by Julian the Apostate, who was enraged at seeing his cherished projects thwarted by this "homunculus." <sup>29</sup>

But that frail body housed an indomitable soul. When Arius began disturbing the city of Alexandria by his questionable doctrines, the deacon Athanasius, then not more than twenty-four years old, had already published, against the pagan spirit and the errors emanating from paganism, an important work of unusual vigor and clearness, the *Adversus Gentes*. In this work of his youth, Athanasius analyses the intellectual and moral state of his time with astonishing sagacity. To his mind idolatry was the source of all the errors then disturbing the world.

He studies idolatry in its two chief forms. First he considers the earliest and most popular form, that of pagan mythology, which regards as objects of adoration, under the names of Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, Mercury, or Venus, either the forces of nature or deified human beings. He discloses the origin of this idolatrous worship, born of pride and voluptuousness. He attacks this old polytheism, sung by the poets and fostered by the emperors, which covered nearly the whole

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> We follow the chronology given by Cavallera at the beginning of his Saint Athanase, p. ix. Cf. Bardy, Saint Athanase, p. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Julian the Apostate (letter 51) said: Μὴ δὲ ἀνὴρ, ἄλλ' ἀνθωπίσκος ("He is not even a man, but a miserable apology for one").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Adversum gentes libri duo is the title which St. Jerome (De viris illustribus, chap. 87) gives to St. Athanasius' work. In agreement with the Benedictines, who entitle the two books respectively Discourse against the Greeks and Discourse on the Incarnation (P. G., XXV), most writers cite these works as two distinct treatises. But in the mind of St. Athanasius and in reality they form a single work.

world with its shadow. The young athlete wrestles with it, strips it of the adornments with which ancient poetry clothed it. He brands it and, after repeating the forceful criticisms of the early apologists and the jibes of the pagans themselves, he covers it with ridicule and overwhelms it with his contempt.

But Athanasius was aware that in his native city idolatry had a more subtle and ethereal form. Neoplatonic philosophy recognized one supreme God. But what is His demiurge, the vague mediator between God and the world? What are those powers arranged at intervals between the Divinity and nature? Why these secondary agents? Does not an all-powerful God suffice? But all that is idolatry, an idolatry apparently less gross than the polytheism of the Greeks, yet an idolatry no less unreasonable, no less corruptive.

After thus exposing the error, Athanasius points out how one may leave the error and rise to the truth. The first way is the study of the human soul, which bears the imprint of God. The second is the study of nature, with its sovereign order, despite numerous contrasts and the complicated relationship of its component forces, attesting the infinite power of the only God who governs it. The third way is that of the inspired Scriptures. The Bible teaches us to see, beyond the magnificent panorama of the world, as also in the depths of our souls, the Thought of God, the eternal Word. With His Word and by His Word, God made all things; and by His Word all things remain subject to His supreme will.

But this is not the last utterance of true religion. Not only did God create us by His Word, but by His Word, says Athanasius, He has redeemed us from sin. To aid man rise from his sins, the Word took a body capable of suffering and dying; yet He remains God, that His sufferings and death might have an infinite value.

Such are the principal lines of the magnificent essay published by the young deacon in 318. There is reason to suppose

that a portion of it at least was written in the solitude of the Thebaid,<sup>31</sup> perhaps under the eyes of the great St. Antony, whose inspiration seems to be visible in several parts. The hypothesis is plausible, although it has no corroboration from any historical testimony. We simply know that for a while Athanasius led the life of an "ascetic." By this title he was acclaimed when he was elected bishop of Alexandria. He often boasted of being the friend of Antony. There is no reason why it may not be true that the relations between these two mighty leaders went back to the time when the deacon wrote his Adversus Gentes.

#### Council of Alexandria (320 or 321)

Enlightened by Athanasius, Alexander decided to proceed energetically against Arius. He summoned him to appear before the assembled clergy of Alexandria and there explain his doctrine. After two lengthy sessions, the assembly was convinced of Arius' guilt and approved the anathema which the Bishop issued against the new heretic. This sentence was confirmed by a council of all the bishops of Egypt and Libya, who also extended it to eleven deacons and two bishops, Secundus of Ptolemais and Theonas of Marmarica, who shared the views of Arius.<sup>32</sup>

#### Arian Doctrine

Inspite of Arius' omissions and ambiguities, Bishop Alexander, his clergy, and his fellow-bishops thoroughly penetrated the thought of the clever sophist.

<sup>31</sup> Ceillier, Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques, IV, chap. 2, art. 2, no. 1. At the very beginning of his book, Athanasius says: "We have not at present the compositions of our teachers," i.e., the early ecclesiastical writers. This statement is more explicable if we suppose Athanasius was writing in the desert.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> On this council, held at Alexandria in 320 or 321, see Hefele, Councils, I, 247-252.

His system was ably built up. From Neoplatonism and Gnosticism it took the idea of an intermediary between God and the world and tried to show that this intermediary was the Word or Son of God.

God is the supreme Being, ineffable, the only unbegotten, the only eternal, the only good, solitary from all eternity; between Him and created, fallen, defiled nature is the Word or Son of God, creator of the world. Strictly speaking, this Word of God is not God; this Son of God is not begotten of God. He is Son only by adoption. He is really quite unlike the substance and personality of the Father. 83 The Word is one of the many powers which God uses. He is, says Arius, simply a secondary cause, "like the locust and the caterpillar," an agent of the divine will.<sup>34</sup> But this mysterious being does not enter into the system of the world. Though truly created, he is not a creature like other creatures. He is a perfect creature, and God could not produce any that is superior to him. However, he increased in graces and merit and thus rendered himself worthy of the glory and even the name of God, which the Father and the Church have given him.<sup>85</sup>

The Word was not only God's instrument in creation; he was also His instrument in the Redemption; he became incarnate, and took a human body, but a body without a soul, for a soul is useless where the Word resides.<sup>36</sup> Mankind will be saved by learning from him the truth that he has transmitted to it from God.

As to the Holy Ghost, Arius was very explicit. He admitted that the person of the Holy Ghost, along with the Father and the Son, constituted a Trinity, but infinitely separated from

<sup>88</sup> Thalia (St. Athanasius, De Synodis, no. 15; First Discourse against the Arians, chaps. 5, 6).

<sup>34</sup> Thalia (First Discourse against the Arians, chap. 5).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Letter to Alexander, in *De Synodis*, no. 16; *Thalia (De Synodis*, no. 15; *First Discourse against the Arians*, chap. 5).

<sup>36</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 27.

the two other persons. Arius seems to consider the Holy Ghost a creature of the Son.<sup>87</sup>

This theological concept in three steps "presented a sort of beauty that was able to seduce both the proud and the simple: the proud philosophers, by its rational appearance and its way of dividing into three parts the effort of passing from the finite to the infinite; the simple faithful, by a fallacious conformity with their mental habits." 38 Speculative minds admired in this system the most seductive theories of the Neoplatonic school and of Gnosticism, set forth with all the apparatus of Aristotelian dialectics. And the people easily accustomed themselves to regarding the Son of God under the aspect of those emperors called Caesars, who governed the world only by obeying the will of the emperor who bore the title of Augustus.

Arius seems not to have tried to develop his system further. "His doctrine was, as it were, complete from the beginning, and did not develop." <sup>39</sup> But we may note that nearly all the heresies of the fourth and fifth century are in it in germ. Arius, by his notions on the inferiority of the Holy Ghost, prepared the way for the doctrine of Macedonius. His theory of Redemption through the mere influence of Christ's teaching and example, opened the way to Pelagius. His manner of conceiving the union of the Word with a soulless body contains the whole system of Apollinaris. His theory of the progressive deification of the Son of God, serves as a foundation for pure Nestorianism.

Once Arius had conceived his system, he devoted all his effort to recruit followers. St. Alexander, in one of his letters,

<sup>37</sup> Idem, p. 28.

<sup>38</sup> Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, III, 72.

<sup>39</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., II, 28. A full exposition of Arius' doctrine will be found in Tixeront, II, 22-29; Le Bachelet, art. "Arianisme" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1784-1791.

mentions the frequent gatherings of the friends of Arius. their wary proselytism, and their schemings with bishops.<sup>40</sup> The Bishop of Alexandria was well informed. The heresiarch, driven from his church, was not satisfied merely to maintain continuous contact with the many friends he counted at Alexandria. He journeyed through the dioceses of Egypt, visiting the bishops on whom he hoped he might count. Among the latter was Meletius of Lycopolis who, long before excommunicated by St. Peter of Alexandria, had, in concert with a few followers, organized a veritable schism and for fifteen years past had been ceaselessly in strife with the hierarchical Church. 41 Arius also relied on his former school companions, disciples of Lucian of Antioch. Proud of their illustrious master, they ordinarily called one another "Collucianists." and pretended to form a sort of school of thinkers. Lastly, the heresiarch was too cunning not to exploit the jealousy of several Eastern Churches toward the see of Alexandria.

Arius profited by all these weaknesses. "Although his appearance was austere, giving the more charm to his sharp turn of mind, he excelled in the ability to win favor. Artfully he concealed the part of his doctrine that was most offensive to Christian hearts, enveloping every difficulty with a few wrongly applied verses of Scripture. He stressed his desire for peace, the sternness of his bishop, and especially of a young secretary who, he said, was of malicious and haughty mind and was making the good old bishop follow him. Arius was ever going and coming, sending deputations; he was acquainted with each one's weak point, and openly flattered it." 43

<sup>40</sup> P. G., XVIII, 547 f.

<sup>41</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 478.

<sup>42</sup> St. Epiphanius, Haereses, LXIX, 7.

<sup>43</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, I, 375 f.

#### Eusebius of Nicomedia

Arius' chief conquest was Eusebius of Nicomedia. This bishop, who was to play a leading part in the spread of Arianism, was formerly at the head of the Church of Berytus (Beirut) in Phenicia. But his ambition turned his eyes to a position of greater importance. By chicanery he succeeded in having himself named bishop of Nicomedia, where the imperial court resided since the time of Diocletian. There he sought to win the favor of Emperor Licinius and, so far as possible, he worked his way into close association with Empress Constantia, the sister of Constantine. One of his purposes was to lessen, by every means in his power, the authority of the sees of Alexandria and Antioch, to the advantage of that of Nicomedia, the Eastern capital of the Empire. This proud but clever and intelligent schemer could be of great aid to Arius. The latter wrote him a letter which begins thus: "To my Lord, the very faithful and very orthodox Eusebius, Arius, persecuted by Bishop Alexander for that Christian truth which you so ably defend, sends greetings." Eusebius at once invited Arius to come to Nicomedia. This valuable approbation, thus publicly given, carried with it the backing of a large number of bishops, among whom was Eusebius of Caesarea.44

### Eusebius of Caesarea

The Bishop of Caesarea was renowned. In his great works, the *Praeparatio Evangelica* and the *Demonstratio Evangelica*, he furnished valuable syntheses of the Catholic faith; by his polemical works he refuted Porphyry and Hierocles; in his *Chronicle* and *Ecclesiastical History* he gave proof of unequaled erudition in the matter of the first centuries of the

<sup>44</sup> On Eusebius of Nicomedia, see Lichtenstein, Eusebius von Nikomedien,

Church. Constantine esteemed him highly and often had recourse to his learning. But his theological scholarship was not on a level with his historical knowledge, and his character lacked firmness. Two reasons inclined him toward Arius. He was a follower of Origen, but did not hold the master's doctrine on the question of eternal creation, and therefore was without the Origenist argument in favor of the eternity of the Word. His lack of determination led him to follow in everything the fortune of his relative, the Bishop of Nicomedia.

Through Empress Constantia, over whom Eusebius of Nicomedia exercised considerable influence, it might be hoped to win even Emperor Constantine. Arianism would surely flatter imperial ambition: by stripping Christ of His divinity, was it not lowering the Church to the rank of a human institution subject to the control of the State?

Fortified with all these supports and all these hopes, Arius' audacity increased. For a while he lived at Nicomedia with Eusebius, and published, probably at the latter's suggestion, a Letter to Bishop Alexander, really a clever, moderate manifesto; but its contents justified all the accusations made against him by the council that had condemned him. Shortly thereafter he published, under the title of Thalia or The Banquet, a sort of poem, a mixture of prose and verse, intended to be sung at feasts; it was based on the rhythm of poems in free verse that were familiar to everybody. The poem began thus:

"According to faith of God's elect, God's prudent ones, Holy children, rightly dividing, God's Holy Spirit receiving,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> St. Jerome wrote: "Arius, intent on leading the world astray, began by misleading the Emperor's sister." Letter 133, no. 4, to Ctesiphon (*P. L.*, XXII, 1153; *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 275).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> This style was invented by the Egyptian poet Sotades, who was ill-reputed for his unmanly immorality. See Fialon, *Saint Athanase*, pp. 63 f. Cf. Bardy, *Saint Athanase*, pp. 13 f.

Have I learned this from the partakers of wisdom, Accomplished, divinely taught, and wise in all things. Along their track have I been walking, with like opinions, I the very famous, the much suffering for God's glory; And taught of God, I have acquired wisdom and knowledge."

In his songs, when he speaks of the Word, Arius does not use the same caution and reserve as in his *Letter to Alexander*. For instance, he says:

"By nature, the Word Himself is alterable, and remains good by His own free will, while He chooseth. . . . In consequence of His works foreknown, did God bring it to pass that He, being such, should come to be." <sup>47</sup>

Arius' words were even freer in the songs he composed at this time for the use of the people. "There were some for sailors, for travelers, for those who worked at the mill. Therein all sorts of things were spoken of, with here and there a phrase about the Word or the Trinity. Arius himself provided both the melody and the words." 48

#### St. Alexander

In the presence of this propaganda, the holy Bishop of Alexandria did not remain inactive. Alexander, though not possessing Athanasius' quick penetration, had a love of God and of souls that led the Church to number him among her saints. As soon as he perceived a danger threatening his people, as soon as he judged that his conscientious duty was involved,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Quoted from First Discourse against the Arians, chap. 5 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., IV, 308 f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IV° siécle, I, 378. Arius has been called the father of religious music in the Christian Church. But he does not merit this honor. St. Athanasius speaks quite otherwise of the *Thalia* and the Arian songs.

his usually gentle and affable character at once revealed unsuspected qualities of energy and firmness. From his hand we have two encyclical letters,<sup>49</sup> written at that time. They are filled with apostolic vigor and holy indignation.

The purpose of the first of these letters is to acquaint all the bishops with the condemnation issued against the heretics, their names, and their teachings, and also to warn the faithful against the schemes of the Arians and their powerful protectors. The second letter is fuller: it contains an orderly refutation of Arianism and sets forth the doctrine professed by the Bishop regarding the Word of God, His eternity, His absolute divinity, and His relations with God the Father and with the world. Although it does not possess the incomparable precision of the letters written later on by Athanasius, and although it is said <sup>50</sup> not to possess all the exactness and clearness that might be desired, yet this remarkable document states the broad lines of Catholic faith concerning the substance of the questions at issue.

Many bishops of Egypt, Libya, Syria, and other countries heeded Alexander's voice and subscribed to his conclusions. But the followers of Arius grew more numerous in their work of propaganda. A Cappadocian rhetorician, named Asterius, was especially conspicuous for his activity. This "manyheaded Sophist," as St. Athanasius calls him, went from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> The second letter is usually referred to as a letter directed personally to Bishop Alexander of Constantinople, but it may have been an encyclical like the first (Tixeront, II, 29). The first letter may be found in Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, I, 6; the second letter is quoted by Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, I, 4. Both will be found in *P. G.*, XVIII, 548, 572.

church to church and publicly read in them a writing in which he systematized Arianism.<sup>51</sup> The bishops who had been won to Arius' party held so-called councils. Two such councils are mentioned especially, one held in Bithynia, and the other in Palestine.<sup>52</sup> At the latter Eusebius of Caesarea presided. The strife became so sharp and the division between Christians so marked that the pagans made it an open subject of mockery in their theaters. Public tranquillity was disturbed as well as the discipline of the Church. Men turned to the two sovereign authorities, one of whom was guardian of the faith of the Church, the other of the security of the Empire: the Pope and the Emperor.

## Emperor Constantine

Pope Sylvester was made acquainted with the affair by the Bishop of Alexandria, who had sent his first letter to the Pope. Before the latter took any steps in the matter, Emperor Constantine, perhaps urged by Eusebius of Nicomedia and also impelled to end a conflict seriously threatening to disturb public order, took a hand in the affair.

Having become master of the whole Empire by the defeat of Licinius in 323 at the battle of Adrianople, Constantine hastened to perform an act of sovereignty in the East. To Arius and Alexander he wrote a letter in which he calls upon them to cease disputing with each other over religious questions that are altogether secondary. He said that, since they were in agreement upon the leading doctrines, that should suffice. The Emperor therefore expected them to effect a prompt reconciliation and thus free him from a great anxiety.<sup>53</sup> If, as seems likely, the Bishop of Nicomedia urged

<sup>51</sup> St. Athanasius, De Synodis, no. 18.

<sup>52</sup> Hefele, Councils, I, 258 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Constantine's letter is to be found in Eusebius, Lite of Constantine, II, 163.

Constantine to intervene,<sup>54</sup> evidently he had not done much to enlighten the Emperor on the significance of the pending controversy.

#### Hosius of Cordova

For the better success of his plan of reconciliation, Constantine made the famous Hosius, bishop of Cordova, the bearer of his letter. This venerable bishop, whom the Emperor consulted habitually, was then sixty-seven years old. It was hoped that everyone would be impressed by his age, his virtues, his position at court, and the marks of wounds he had received for the faith in Diocletian's persecution. To expect any such effect, however, was to misjudge the obstinacy of a sectarian and the firmness of a bishop convinced that he is defending the cause of the faith. It also indicated a failure to understand how the venerable messenger would purpose to accomplish his mission. Hosius, theretofore a stranger to the Eastern controversies, may for a while also have supposed that the dispute between Alexander and Arius was about questions of secondary importance.

But, after reaching Alexandria and receiving an explanation of the meaning of the Greek words that were foreign to him,<sup>56</sup> he grasped the mighty import of the dispute and realized that the office of conciliator at any cost, which had been entrusted to him by the Emperor, was no longer possible. We lack detailed information of what he did in Egypt. We simply know that he vigorously opposed Sabellianism by setting forth the Christian doctrine on the nature and persons of the Holy

<sup>54</sup> It is even held that Eusebius of Nicomedia had something to do with the composition of the imperial letter. (Hefele, I, 260.) Others think that the text of the letter as we have it is merely a paraphrase composed by Eusebius of Caesarea. (Le Bachelet, art. "Arianisme" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1783.) At any rate, the substance of the letter is to be found in the character of Emperor Constantine. Cf. Bardy, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>55</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 505.

<sup>56</sup> Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, III, 7.

Trinity.<sup>57</sup> Probably he wished to make clear the difference that separated the Sabellian teaching from the orthodox doctrine. We know also that his mission was a failure. If we are to accept the word of Sulpicius Severus,<sup>58</sup> Hosius, on his return to the Emperor, told him that only a general council could settle the weighty questions that were troubling the capital of Egypt.

"Even though so many centuries removed from the events, a Christian posterity which considers those religious disputes with an interest that time cannot weaken, understands the importance attaching to that intervention of a Western bishop at the very birth of the great Arian heresy. If, as often claimed by a criticism that takes doubt for knowledge, the dogma of the Trinity among Christians was a late product of the philosophical fancies of the Greek Fathers, unacquainted with the primitive teachings of the Gospel, if Christ presented Himself to His disciples merely as a superior man and a prophet, and if it was philosophy that thought of making Him a God, a Western bishop, who grew up far from any center of study and in the traditional faith, would have inclined in favor of Arius against Alexander. Of the two controverted opinions, he would surely have accepted that which offered the simpler and more human explanation of the dogma of the Trinity. But it was the contrary that occurred and was bound to occur. The tradition, among Christians, was the divinity of Christ; Jesus Christ man and God—this is what the child was taught to lisp in its mother's arms and to adore at the foot of the altar. It was philosophy, on the contrary, which, seeking to enlighten the mystery, attenuated it, distorted it. Hosius' simple faith did not for a moment misapprehend it." 59

<sup>57</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Sulpicius Severus, History, II, 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IV<sup>o</sup> siècle, I, 385 f. De Broglie, in agreement with Baronius and Tillemont places at this period a sharp letter from Constantine to Arius and the Arians. It is quoted by Gelasius of Cyzicus in his

The Bishop of Cordova could also report to Constantine that the Arian controversy was not the sole cause of disturbance in the East. The Easter controversy and the Meletian Schism called for the intervention of a supreme authority. Bishop Alexander <sup>60</sup> and several other members of the clergy <sup>61</sup> as well as Hosius viewed this intervention as a council of the universal Church. That project, so full of grandeur, was sure to attract Constantine's genius. Eusebius says that the Emperor "resolved, therefore, to bring as it were a divine array against this enemy, convoked a general council, and invited the speedy attendance of bishops from all quarters." <sup>62</sup> The place which Constantine fixed upon for the assembly was Nicaea in Bithynia.

Actorum concilii Nicaeni commentarius, 3; and it is mentioned by St. Epiphanius in his Haereses, 9. The document is bizarre, and its genuineness is not beyond question.

- 60 St. Epiphanius, Haereses, LXVIII, 4.
- <sup>61</sup> Ex sacerdotum sententia, says Rufinus.

62 Eusebius, Life of Constantine, bk. 3, chap. 6. According to Eusebius, Constantine declared that he convoked the Council of Nicaea of his own accord. (Op. cit., bk. 3, chap. 12.) But we know that he consulted priests and bishops. Among these must have been the Bishop of Rome. Moreover, the fact that Pope St. Sylvester sent two legates to the council implies his ratification of the imperial convocation. This is the explanation given by Bellarmine, Hefele, Mazzella, Palmieri, Phillips, Wernz, and others. Funk (Kirchengeschichtliche Abhandlungen, I, 39 f.) gathers several texts and arguments to show that Constantine acted of his own accord and in his own name. The numerous testimonies adduced by the learned author do not void those which show that Constantine consulted the clergy nor do they prevent it being true that the pope gave his tacit approval and explicit ratification. The sovereign pontiff's absolute and exclusive right to summon a council is not disputed by Catholics. See Hefele, Councils, I, 6. The sixth ecumenical council (A. D. 680) says: "Constantine and Sylvester summoned the Council of Nicaea." Hardouin, III, 1417; Mansi, XI, 661.

#### CHAPTER II

# The Council of Nicaea (325)

In the fourth century the city of Nicaea, which today is a wretched little village called Isnik, was next to Nicomedia in importance among the cities of Bithynia. It was located on the shore of Lake Ascania, one of the affluents of the Propontis. Having commercial relations with a large number of countries and being within reach of the bishops of Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, it was also relatively easy of access for the bishops of Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Germany. "Furthermore, on the shores of the Propontis and the Hellespont it was that Constantine's thoughts began to be fixed. From this time his imagination never lost sight of those districts so oddly broken and divided by gulfs and lagoons, where nature itself seems to have prepared the piers of a great bridge to connect the East and the West." <sup>1</sup>

### Letter of Convocation

The letter of convocation which the Emperor sent to the bishops was drawn up in terms both urgent and respectful. He said: "Certainly all of you are aware that nothing is closer to my heart than pious devotion to God. Previously I had in mind to call a meeting of bishops in the valley of Ancyra in Galatia; but now, for several reasons, it seems to me advantageous to assemble a council in the city of Nicaea in Bithynia. It will be more accessible for the bishops of Italy and Europe.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., II, 16.

Its salubrious climate leaves nothing to be desired. And it will be easier for me to be present there and to take part in the assembly. Therefore, very dear brethren, I let you know that it is my wish that without delay you betake yourselves to the said city of Nicaea. That you may assist in person at the deliberations, each of you will be at pains to avoid any delay. May God keep you, very dear brethren." <sup>2</sup>

As in the recent instance of the Council of Arles,<sup>3</sup> the "public means of conveyance" were set in motion. All the countries conquered by Roman arms were connected to the center of the Empire by a fine system of highways, paved with large slabs. Their remarkable solidity is still attested by numerous remains. By following some one or more of these roads, the bishops would find at every stage chariots, coaches, mounts and beasts of burden, servants, and even rest houses, where employees of the imperial postal service placed themselves at their service by order of the Emperor.<sup>4</sup>

The whole episcopate of the Empire, and even from beyond the Roman frontiers, was in motion.

"Impelled by the anticipation of a happy result to the conference, by the hope of enjoying present peace, and the desire of beholding something new and strange in the person of so admirable an emperor," <sup>5</sup>

not only the bishops, but priests, deacons, and even some of the laity, brought along by the bishops as advisers and helpers, set out.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Martin, Anal. sacra, IV, 224; Hefele, I, 268.

<sup>3</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 511.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 6, 9. On the imperial postal service of that time, see Maury, Les Postes romaines.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Eusebius, op. cit., III, 6 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 521).

## Arrival of the Bishops

By the middle of May 325,6 the bishops were gathered at Nicaea to the number of about three hundred.7 "The first meeting of these devout men was marked by touching scenes. United by one and the same faith and by common trials, but separated by seas and mountains, they were personally unacquainted with one another, knowing only each other's merits and sufferings. . . . The most illustrious servants of God were pointed out. In the first rank were the survivors of the persecution, bearing on their bodies the stigmata of a glorious confession. There was Paphnutius, bishop of a city in the Thebaid; one of his legs had been rendered useless by mutilation when he was laboring in the mines, and one of his eyes had been gouged out. There was Paul, bishop of Neocaesarea on the Euphrates, one of whose hands had been mutilated by fire. When they entered, a feeling of compassion swept over the assemply, and many of those present ran up to them to kiss the scars of those holy wounds. The solitaries, whose remarkable austerities were favorite subjects of fireside tales in every Christian family, also attracted attention. There was James of Nisibis, recognized by his garment of camel's hair and goat's hair which made one think of John the Baptist. For years he had lived on the desert frontiers of Mesopotamia and Persia, subsisting on raw herbs and wild fruit. There was Spiridion, bishop of Cyprus, whose childlike gentleness and rustic manners were proverbial, who still kept sheep even after becoming a bishop; but he did not keep them very well and,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Probably May 20. This date is discussed in Hefele, I, 274.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> St. Athanasius more than once speaks of three hundred bishops. In his *Epistola ad Afros*, chap. 2 (*P. G.*, XXVI, 1031) he explicitly says 318. The number must have varied between the opening day of the Council and its closing. Socrates, Theodoret, Rufinus, and Gelasius of Cyzicus accept the number 318, which St. Ambrose (*De fide ad Gratianum*, bk. 1, prologue) and several later writers compare with the 318 servants of Abraham.

when robbers were minded to steal them, he wanted to know why they did not take the trouble to ask him for them. At the head of the Western bishops walked the deputation from the Bishop of Rome, St. Sylvester, whose advanced age made the journey impossible for him. He was represented by two priests, Vitus and Vincent, and his deputation was under the direction of Constantine's friend, the light of Spain, Hosius of Cordova, Lastly, two barbarians, a Persian named John, and a Goth named Theophilus, completed this assembly of mankind. The mixture of accents and even of different languages made the oneness of sentiment even more striking. It was a reminder of the gift of tongues and the first Pentecost. All the nations which on that day had been scattered were now reunited after three centuries, proud of the trials they had undergone for the sign of the faith, and of the countless children they had brought forth in Jesus Christ." 8

## First Meeting of the Council

The first assembly of the venerable Fathers took place in the principal church of Nicaea, a building which has disappeared, its site now marked by a solitary plane tree on the edge of the village of Isnik. A few days later the Council moved to a large hall in the imperial palace at Nicaea, which Constantine placed at its disposition.

The Emperor was detained at Nicomedia by festivities in commemoration of his victory over Licinius and was unable to come to Nicaea at the same time as the bishops. The latter

<sup>8</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., II, 17-21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> On this question, see the critical discussion by Leclercq in Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, I, 403, 409 note.

<sup>10</sup> Stanley, History of the Eastern Church, p. 212.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The imperial palace at Nicaea was only an occasional residence of the emperor, but it was large enough to accommodate the Fathers of the Council. Cf. Hefele, I, 279 note.

did not wish to begin their deliberations before Constantine's arrival. But a meeting of so many men, animated by varied dispositions regarding a question which passionately stirred them, inevitably produced an immediate exchange of views. Well instructed laymen, even pagan philosophers, with an interest of curiosity in the great intellectual discussion which they foresaw would take place at Nicaea, had followed the clergy thither. Gelasius of Cyzicus, an historian of the Council, relates that Arius brought with him professional debaters, ready to lend him assistance. For the heresiarch was there, presumptuous and proud, confident that his learning would dazzle and his sophistry disconcert so many simple men, more accustomed, he thought, to catechize the people and relieve their distress than to argue according to the methods of Aristotle and Plato. 18

# Pagan Philosophers at Nicaea

If it be a fact that the pagan philosophers were invited by Arius to take his cause in hand, we can well suppose that many of them gave their assistance wholeheartedly. A Christian heresy might seem to them a happy issue for the old pagan idolatry, threatened on all sides. In Arius' doctrine, Jesus appeared as a demigod. Even though he is purer and nobler than the demigods of the old Greek mythology, popular superstition

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Gelasius of Cyzicus, Actorum concilii Nicaeni commentarius, II, 12, in Mansi, II, 826. The work of Gelasius, written in the fifth century at the beginning of the reign of Zeno, has been a matter of considerable discussion by certain scholars. (Lejay, Ancienne philologie chrétienne, in the Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse, 1906, p. 280. Cf. Batiffol, La Littérature grecque, p. 224.) But a learned historian, Löschcke, in his Das Syntagma des Gelasius Cyzicus, proves that Gelasius had many precious documents at hand. Cf. Hefele-Leclercq, Histoire des Conciles, I, 393 f. note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The heretics pretended to make fun of the general ignorance of the members of the Nicene Council. Socrates says that Sabinus of Heraclea, one of these malicious defamers, did however commend one of the Fathers, Eusebius, the author of the Ecclesiastical History. Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, I, 8.

might place at his side or beneath him others more or less adapted to the varied forms of his ideal; and the equivocation might mislead many ignorant Christians.

But these philosophers, and Arius too, were reckoning without the perspicacity and dialectical ability of the young deacon, whom the Bishop of Alexandria brought with him to take part in the Council. From the very beginning it was evident to all, as Socrates says, that "Athanasius was the most forceful opponent of the Arians." They reckoned also without the enlightened faith of the venerable Fathers of the Council, most of whom would not subject to the scrutiny of reason alone the foundations of a doctrine which depended chiefly on a supernatural revelation.

There is an interesting and curious contemporary story which, with its literary embellishments and its dramatic issue, has the semblance of a legend but which, according to the best critics, rests on some official reports. This story recounts a dispute between a pagan philosopher and the principal bishops at Nicaea. After a few skirmishes, one of the latter said: "My dear friend, we have already warned you once for all that, when the question is one of divine mysteries, you must not ask how or why." The philosopher thereupon abjured his errors and was converted.

Another story, with perhaps no greater historical validity, symbolizes still better and more touchingly the nature of these controversies, in which the traditional faith of upright and humble souls was brought face to face with the quibbles of proud learning. A certain philosopher, says Rufinus, was not convinced by the ablest of the Christians. Like a serpent, he

<sup>14</sup> Gelasius (Mansi, II, 808) and, in agreement with him, Hefele (Councils, I, 273) call him an archdeacon. On this title, see Leclercy's article in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne, I, 2733 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Socrates, I, 8.

<sup>16</sup> Löschcke, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Gelasius, in Mansi, II, 829-975.

evaded all the proofs of the falseness of his doctrines. Finally an artless and untutored old man, quite without skill in the art of debate, but one who had confessed the faith in the days of persecution, said to him: "Listen, in the name of Jesus Christ." Then, in simple words and manner, as though he were instructing a child, he gave the philosopher an exposition of the Creed: the doctrine of God the Creator and Master of all things, and that of the eternal Word of God taking pity on the errors of mankind, becoming man, and dying for them so as to redeem them to their God. Lastly he said: "Philosopher, do you wish to believe these things?" The philosopher, touched by grace, answered: "I believe them." To this the old man replied: "Come, then, and follow me to the Lord, to receive the seal of the Christian faith." The philosopher turned to his followers and hearers, urged them to embrace the doctrine of Christ, and himself became a member of holy Church.18

## Emperor Constantine at the Council

Meanwhile Constantine arrived in Nicaea. At once the Council celebrated the solemn opening of its deliberations. According to the most probable calculation, the date was June 14, 325.<sup>19</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea, who played an important part in the Council, describes the ceremony thus:

"On each side of the interior of the central building of the palace were many seats disposed in order, which were occupied by those who had been invited to attend, according to their rank. As soon, then, as the whole assembly had seated themselves with becoming gravity, a general silence prevailed, in expectation of the Emperor's arrival. And first of all, three of his immediate family entered in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Rufinus, Ecclesiastical History, I, 3. Sozomen and Gelasius repeat Rufinus' account.

<sup>19</sup> See the discussion of this date in Hefele, I, 274 ff.

succession, and others also preceded his approach, not of the soldiers or guards who usually accompanied him, but only friends who avowed the faith of Christ. And now, all rising at the signal which indicated the Emperor's entrance, at last he himself proceeded through the midst of the assembly, like some heavenly rays of light, reflecting the glowing radiance of a purple robe, and adorned with the brilliant splendor of gold and precious stones. Such was the external appearance of his person, and with regard to his mind, it was evident that he was distinguished by piety and godly fear. This was indicated by his downcast eyes, the blush on his countenance, and the modesty of his gait. All these graces, united to a suavity of manner and a serenity becoming his imperial station, declared the excellence of his mental qualities to be above all praise. As soon as he had advanced to the upper end of the seats, at first he remained standing and, when a low chair of wrought gold had been set for him, he waited until the bishops had beckoned to him, and then sat down, and after him the whole assembly did the same." 20

The bishop who was seated at the Emperor's right and who is not otherwise designated by Eusebius, perhaps because it was himself,<sup>21</sup> arose to compliment the Emperor. Then Constantine, in a calm and gentle tone, spoke the following words in Latin, which another present rendered into Greek:

"I feel myself bound to render thanks to God the universal King because, in addition to all His other benefits, He has granted me a blessing higher than all the rest, in permitting me to see you not only all assembled together, but all united in a common harmony of sentiment. . . . Intestine strife within the Church of God is far more evil and dangerous than any kind of war or conflict; and these our differences appear to me more grievous than any outward trouble. . . . I feel that my desires will be most completely fulfilled when I

<sup>20</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Tillemont, *Mémoires* (1732 ed.), VI, 356. This view, adopted by De Broglie and Duchesne, is opposed by solid arguments in a work by Cavallera, who maintains that the opening speech of the Council was delivered by St. Eustathius of Antioch. See Cavallera, *Le Schisme d'Antioche*, pp. 34 f.

can see you all united in one judgment, and that common spirit of peace and concord prevailing amongst you all, which it becomes you, as consecrated to the service of God, to commend to others. By such conduct you will at the same time be acting in a manner most pleasing to the supreme God, and you will confer an exceeding favor on me who am your fellow-servant." <sup>22</sup>

"The Emperor had opened the Council as a kind of honorary president, and he continued to be present at it; but the direction of the theological discussions, properly speaking, was naturally the business of the ecclesiastical leaders of the Council, and was left to them." <sup>23</sup>

And Eusebius states that the Emperor, after his address, left the discussions in the hands of "those who presided in the Council." <sup>24</sup>

### Hosius of Cordova

These words refer to those who were later called patriarchs or primates, and who already enjoyed an undisputed authority over their colleagues.<sup>25</sup> But we must not conclude from these words that the Council of Nicaea had several presiding officers. That title and office belonged only to Hosius, bishop of Cordova. In the lists of signatures of the Fathers of the Council, Hosius' name always comes first. A study of these lists and several reliable testimonies establish beyond doubt the historical fact that Hosius alone was the president of the Council.<sup>26</sup> It is equally certain that he exercised that office in the name of the Pope. Gelasius explicitly says that "the Bishop of Cordova came to Nicaea in the name of the Bishop of Rome, with Vitus and Vincent, priests." <sup>27</sup> Eusebius tells us that

<sup>22</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Hefele, I, 281.

<sup>24</sup> τοις τής συνόδου προέδροις. Eusebius, op. cit., III, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 433.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> For this evidence, see Hefele, I, 36 f., 281.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Gelasius, op. cit., I, 5; Mansi, II, 805.

Pope Sylvester, on account of his age, could not undertake the journey. Vitus and Vincent, who were only priests, could indeed speak in his name, but they could not preside over a meeting of bishops. For at least twelve years Hosius had been the Emperor's confidant. His recent mission to Alexandria drew upon him the attention of both East and West. Since then no European bishop was better acquainted with the Arian controversy than he was. All these reasons recommended him to the Pope's choice. Had he not been thus appointed by the Pope, the Council, in which the Eastern element predominated,<sup>28</sup> would not have been willing to place a simple Spanish bishop ahead of the great patriarchs of the East.<sup>29</sup>

#### Parties in the Council

From the very first session the followers of Arius, though only a minority, appeared to be full of confidence. The Council was clearly divided into two extreme groups. Gathered about Alexander of Alexandria, Marcellus of Ancyra, and the deacon Athanasius, were all those who wished unequivocally to follow the path of tradition. Eusebius of Nicomedia and Maris of Chalcedon were the leaders of those who demanded the reconsideration of the symbols of faith, however ancient

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> The majority of the members of the Council were Greeks. Among the Latins, besides the papal legates Vitus (or Victor) and Vincent, we find only Hosius of Cordova, Caecilian of Carthage, Mark of Calabria, Domnus of Stridon in Pannonia, and Nicasius of Die (not of Dijon, as Hefele says). See Morin, D'où était évéque Nicasius, l'unique représentant des Gaules au concile de Nicée, in the Revue bénédictine, XVI (1899), pp. 72-75, and Lejay, in the Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse, V (1900), p. 454.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Schröckh (*Kirchengeschichte*, p. 336) and Duruy (*History of Rome*, VII, 538 note) hold the opinion that Hosius presided at the Council in Constantine's name. But this view cannot be maintained. Constantine never took the attitude of a president of the Council, even through a delegate. It is true that at a later date Pope Stephen V, in a letter to Emperor Basil, speaks to the Eastern ruler of "the council presided over by the Emperor Constantine"; but these words should be understood as referring to the presidency of honor, which we have mentioned.

these might be.<sup>30</sup> A moderate party fluctuated between the two.<sup>31</sup> The leader of this party was evidently Eusebius of Caesarea. The Arians counted on his instability of character to win him to their side. And they placed reliance upon Eusebius of Nicomedia's relations with influential circles at court and upon the memories of fellowship of the Lucianist school. This presumption caused their failure.

In substance, what was it they asked, at least for the time being? That Arius' ideas be regarded as a debatable opinion in the Church, with the right to be affirmed in opposition to the doctrine maintained by Alexander and Marcellus. Their demand seemed to receive sanction by one of Constantine's first acts. Eusebius relates that the Emperor, as soon as he arrived in Nicaea, was besieged by various complaints or accusations emanating from the different parties of the Council, incriminating several of its members. The Emperor commmanded the memorials to be burnt, saying: "I am but a man, and it would be evil in me to take cognizance of such matters, seeing that the accuser and the accused are priests." <sup>32</sup> He seemed thus to take an impartial stand between the Arians and their opponents.

## Arius before the Council

Arius did not have a right to sit as a member of the Council. But he was ready to argue before it. Soon he was sent for, and went to the Council full of confidence. The innovator was infatuated with his role by the clamor being made over him,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Sozomen, I, 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> According to the reckoning of historians, this group must have counted 12 to 15 bishops. (Hefele, I, 285.) The bishops who were clearly in favor of Arius' doctrine might have reached the number of seventeen.

<sup>32</sup> Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History, I, 17.

the great hopes stirred in him through the intrigues and high influence of the Bishop of Nicomedia, this gathering of all the bishops of the Catholic Church to discuss his ideas, and this movement of the whole world on account of him. He forsook every thought of prudence. In the presence of the Council he carried his views to their very limit, emphasizing the most daring affirmations of his poem *Thalia*. He maintained that the Word is not God, that "whereas all things were made out of nothing, so the Word of God was made out of nothing, and once He was not; that the Son is named Word and Son according to grace;" <sup>33</sup> that this so-called Wisdom was incapable of knowing the Father and did not know even His own substance.

When he finished, it was evident that his case was lost.<sup>34</sup> Venerable bishops there were who stopped their ears so as not to hear such blasphemies. Even in the ranks of the third party the greater number showed their displeasure. Both Eusebiuses had to use their influence with the Emperor to keep him from employing force against the heresiarch.

Thenceforth no one in the Council ventured to maintain pure Arianism. All the tactics employed by Arius' friends were directed toward getting the Council to sanction a formula that would leave the door open for speculation regarding the nature and origin of the Word. Both Eusebiuses endeavored with all their might to accomplish this. Hence, too, Athanasius and his friends strove to place the third party under the necessity of declaring themselves clearly either for or against the traditional doctrine. All the subsequent strife is to be explained by this double tactic.

<sup>38</sup> St. Athanasius, First Discourse against the Arians, chap. 5. St. Athanasius places all these blasphemies on the lips of Arius speaking before the Council. ταθτα και τοιαθτα λέγων ὁ "Αρειος . . . ἐν τῆ κατὰ Νίκαιαν συνόδφ. Cf. Socrates, I, 9; Sozomen, I, 17.

<sup>34</sup> Theodoret, Ecclesiastical History, I, 19 (alias 20).

#### Procedure

What was the plan of procedure of the First Ecumenical Council? <sup>35</sup> How were the daily program and order of business determined? What method of debate and of voting was in use at the sessions? What degree of initiative devolved upon the presiding officer, the papal legates, the metropolitans, and the simple members of the Council? On all these points we are left to vague conjecture. <sup>36</sup>

"The analogy which we may suppose to have existed between the Nicene and later Synods has caused the admission that at Nicaea the members of the Synod were divided into commissions or private congregations which prepared the materials for the general sessions.<sup>37</sup> But we find no trace of this fact in the ancient documents; and the accounts of Eusebius <sup>38</sup> and others leave us rather to suppose that there were no such commissions, but only general sessions of the bishops." <sup>39</sup>

The Emperor was present at all the sessions. But the part taken by him seems to have been simply to prevent the conflicts from becoming bitter, and to promote a spirit of harmony. Says Eusebius:

"The Emperor gave patient audience to all alike, and received every proposition with steadfast attention and, by occasionally assisting

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> We have already observed (Mourret, op. cit., I, 76) that the assembly at Jerusalem in the year 42 should be regarded as a real council. But there could be no question of rules of procedure for that first gathering of the Apostles and their chief auxiliaries.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Batiffol's article, "Le Règlement des premiers conciles africains et le règlement du sénat," Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétiennes (January 16, 1913), gives some valuable indications. The meetings were public, each question was placed before the assembly by a relatio of the president; there was no voting in a strict sense of the word but, as in the Roman senate, the members took their places on one side or the other according as they were in favor of or opposed to the proposed resolution.

<sup>37</sup> Moehler, Saint Athanase, French trans., I, 229.

<sup>38</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 13.

<sup>39</sup> Hefele, I, 284.

the argument of each party in turn, he gradually disposed even the most vehement disputants to a reconciliation. At the same time, by the affability of his address to all, he appeared in a truly attractive and amiable light, persuading some, convincing others by his reasonings, praising those who spoke well, and urging all to unity of sentiment, until at last he succeeded in bringing them to one mind and judgment respecting every disputed question." <sup>40</sup>

It may be that the biographer of Constantine somewhat exaggerates the part taken by his hero, but he does not substantially alter its character. All that we know of Constantine shows that he wished to reëstablish good order and peace.

Three chief questions, of unequal importance, became the subject of the Council's deliberations: the Arian controversy, the Meletian Schism, and the Easter question.

### The Arian Controversy

Rufinus says that, with regard especially to the Arian controversy, "they did not want to decide so serious a matter without due consideration. Daily sessions were held. Arius' opinions were discussed profoundly and he himself was frequently summoned to the Council. Attentive consideration was given to the reasons that should be advanced against his views." Rufinus further tells us that the minds of the Fathers were quickly and unanimously determined "regarding the impious doctrine of Arius and that the confessors especially declared themselves vigorously in opposition to that heresy." <sup>41</sup> The fact is that Arius' first explanations left in the minds of all the conviction that his views were false. But we must admire the prudence of the venerable Council, which was unwilling to make a decision until it had examined the matter carefully and methodically.

<sup>40</sup> Eusebius, op. cit., III, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Rufinus, Ecclesiastical History, I, 2.

The sight of such an attitude must have deeply impressed the more serious minds of that time. "For more than three hundred years, at no place in the Empire had a free assembly met, not once had the voice of conscience been heard in a silence that prevailed under an absolute power, a silence which was broken only by the tiresome panegyrics of orators or by the groans of victims. For the first time in the memory of many generations, were to be seen upright and honorable men, conscious of their personal dignity and unafraid in their respectful independence, assembled in the presence of the master of the world, deliberating before him without let or hindrance. Honest and open discussion took the place of those hypocritical farces of legality and power which were continually being acted upon the disturbed stage of the Empire. A tone of truthfulness awakened men's conscience which had so long been forgetful of its freedom and its rights." 42

At the official sessions of the Council it seems that, except the Emperor, no layman was allowed to address the assembly. Sozomen, mentioning the different speakers, names only bishops.<sup>48</sup> It is said, however, that there also took part in the debates certain ecclesiastics who were especially accredited to the bishops, such as the deacon Athanasius of Alexandria and the priest Alexander of Constantinople.

### Marcellus

At the head of the defenders of the traditional faith, as we learn from St. Athanasius,<sup>44</sup> was the Bishop of Ancyra, Marcellus. In 314 he had taken a very active part in a council held in his episcopal city.<sup>45</sup> His intentions were beyond reproach, but his orthodoxy was more enthusiastic than it was safe. In

<sup>42</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, II, 15.

<sup>48</sup> Sozomen, I, 20.

<sup>44</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia contra Arianos, chaps. 23, 32.

<sup>45</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 519-521.

his desire to combat Arianism more effectively, this Marcellus of Ancyra later had recourse to a system approaching Sabellianism and, in his effort to avoid too great a distinction between the Father and the Son, he seems to have made no distinction at all between them. Probably, under pressure of attacks by his clever opponents, at the outset he let slip some imprudent expressions which the Eusebian party later made use of against the champions of orthodoxy. Nevertheless Athanasius always remained indulgent toward this valiant companion of his first struggles.<sup>46</sup>

#### Athanasius

The ideas of the young Alexandrian deacon were far more profound and his expressions more exact. As we are told by St. Gregory Nazianzen,<sup>47</sup> when the Arians saw this short and almost frail champion, with his bearing of assurance and his lofty brow, rise up to speak, there seemed to pass through their ranks a shudder of hatred. But the majority of the Council looked with pride upon him who would become the eloquent interpreter of their mind.

No one excelled Athanasius in ability to seize upon the main point of a difficulty, to set forth, in the truth under attack, the central idea on which everything else depended. He illumined this point in such a way as to shed light upon the faith at the same time that he exposed the heresy. Arius, in his system, begins with the idea of divine transcendence; Athanasius starts his theory with the concept of redemption. "The basis of the Christian faith," he says, "is nothing else but the mystery of the Word incarnated to redeem men and to make them children of God. But how could He divinize

<sup>46</sup> St. Epiphanius, Haereses, no. 72. Cf. Zahn, Marcellus von Ancyra; Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 38-44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, In laudem Athanasii, P. G., XXXV, 1081-1128.

them if He were not Himself God? How could He communicate a divine sonship, even an adoptive sonship, if He were not by His own nature the Son of God?"

Then, directly attacking the heretical doctrine, he says: "If the Word was created, how is it that God, who created Him, could not create the world? If the world was created by the Word, why could we not say it was created by God?" Throughout his life Athanasius adds new statements to these points of view; but the latter remain the basic inspiration of his whole polemic and his entire theology. 48

### Eusebius of Nicomedia

From the time that Arius uttered his first imprudent statements, the able Bishop of Nicomedia was careful not to defend the Arian expressions. He was the acknowledged leader of the third party. Relying upon his relations with those in high places and upon the favor of the court, and understanding Constantine's frequently expressed desire to end these religious controversies as quickly as possible, he sought merely to prevent, in the foreseen condemnation, any categorical formula and to save Arius' idea by toning down its expression.

If we consider the mental habits of a large number of the conciliar Fathers, who were more accustomed to catechize the unlearned than to discuss questions in the schools, we can appreciate that the danger was great. All of Athanasius' sagacity and firmness were needed to avert the peril.

The first symbol of faith offered by the Bishop of Nicomedia was promptly rejected by the bishops.<sup>49</sup> So far as we

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., II, 67 f.; St. Athanasius, De Synodis, no. 51; First Discourse against the Arians, 16, 39; Second Discourse, 24, 26, 40, 69. Cf. Voisin, La Doctrine christologique de saint Athanase, in the Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, I (1900), 226-248.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> The order of what follows is conjectural. We give it in practical accord with the best historians of the Council—De Broglie, Hefele, and Tixeront. The proceed-

can make out, this symbol, while omitting Arius' most questionable formulas, contained certain inadmissible expressions. It seems the symbol said that the Word was the work of the Father (ποίημα κτίσμα),<sup>50</sup> that He was not immutable by His very nature (τρεπτῆς φύσεως).<sup>51</sup> A second symbol, which was vague and settled nothing, was proposed by Eusebius of Caesarea. Therein we find the Word is called "God of God, light of light, life of life, only Son, firstborn of every creature, begotten of the Father before all ages, by whom everything was made." Such a formula would have decided nothing. Constantine—so we are told by Eusebius—would have been satisfied with it, on condition that the word δμοούσως (consubstantial) be added. But the majority showed themselves more exigent.

The Bishop of Nicomedia was resourceful. He considered a third subterfuge, suggesting that the symbol be made up almost exclusively of expressions taken from Holy Scripture. He hoped these expressions would be general enough to permit an interpretation favorable to the Arian ideas.

The orthodox majority was on the point of being caught in this new trap, when Eusebius' trick was foiled. The colorful vivacity with which St. Athanasius relates the incident has led historians to suppose he took the leading part.<sup>52</sup>

To indicate clearly that the Word did not come forth from nothing, as the Arians maintained, the Fathers were inclined to accept the expression, "The Word is from God, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ."

ings of the Council, if, in fact, they were drawn up in writing, have not been preserved. The creed, the twenty canons, and the synodal decree are the only extant documents of the Council. But, with considerable likelihood, we can fix the chief landmarks of the history of the Council from the narratives of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Rufinus, and from the data supplied by St. Athanasius in his Epistle in Defense of the Nicene Definition and his Epistle to the Bishops of Africa. On the sources of this history, see Hefele, I, 262 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Theodoret, Ecclesiastical History, I, 7.

<sup>51</sup> St. Ambrose, De Fide, III, 7. Cf. Hefele, I, 286.

<sup>52</sup> St. Athanasius, Epistle in Defense of the Nicene Definition, sec. 20 f.

But presently the Eusebians were seen whispering together. "Is not everything from God," they said, "we and all other creatures? Did not St. Paul say that 'all things are of God,' 53 and did he not speak of God 'by whom are all things'?" 54 The Fathers expressed their idea more precisely by adding: "The Word is the power of God, the eternal image of the Father, perfectly like to the Father, unchangeable and true God." But, when this passage was read, the Eusebians were observed again exchanging signs of mutual understanding. They were caught saying to one another: "All these expressions are suitable for the Son of God, since, according to the Bible, they are applied to man. Is not man called the image and glory of God?" 55 Some, in irreverent pleasantry, said: "In the book of the prophet Joel, even the locusts are called a great host of God." 56 Others, in a more serious tone, quoted St. Paul's words: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ?" 57 And they then said: "Does it not follow that the words 'immutable' and 'eternal' may be applied to a creature?"

### Homoousios in the Creed

To cut short these unfair interpretations, the Fathers declared that the Word was "of the very essence of God,  $\epsilon \kappa \tau \hat{\eta} s$  ovolas  $\tau o \hat{v} \theta \epsilon o \hat{v}$ ." But would not advantage be taken of this expression? It seems that Athanasius would have been satisfied with it. <sup>58</sup> But one of the Fathers, perhaps Hosius, proposed a word that soon won the approval of the majority. It was the word *homoousios* (consubstantial). It had the advantage of being an expression that was positively condemned by the

<sup>53</sup> See II Cor. 5: 18.

<sup>54</sup> See I Cor. 8:6.

<sup>55</sup> See I Cor. 11:7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Joel 2:25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Rom. 8:35.

<sup>58</sup> St. Athanasius, De Synodis, no. 41.

Bishop of Nicomedia. One day that leader of the third party had written: "If we say that the Son is true God and uncreate, then we are in the way to confess Him to be of one substance ( $\delta\mu oo \ell \sigma los$ ) with the Father." <sup>59</sup> How would the Eusebian party now dare to interpret the word  $\delta\mu oo \ell \sigma los$  in conformity with their own doctrine?

The word itself seemed remarkably well chosen. Being made up of two words, one meaning "same" and the other meaning "substance," it implied two very subtle philosophical ideas: identity of substance and plurality of persons. The word "consubstantial" could apply to two beings only if they were distinct from each other. As St. Basil says: "Nothing is itself of like substance with itself, but one thing is of like substance with another thing." <sup>60</sup>

Moreover, the word was not a novel expression. Eusebius of Caesarea declares that "several bishops, who were learned and illustrious writers, had already used it." <sup>61</sup> Paul of Samosata had even tried to claim it as properly expressive of his doctrine, but he explained it in such a way that the Third Council of Antioch condemned its use. <sup>62</sup> St. Athanasius writes as follows:

"The bishops were compelled to resay that the Son is 'one in substance' with the Father, by way of signifying that the Son was from the Father and not merely like, but is the same in likeness, and of showing that the Son's likeness and unalterableness was different from such copy of the same as is ascribed to us, which we acquire from virtue on the ground of observance of the commandments. . . . The generation of the Son from the Father is not according to the nature of men. . . . The Word is ever in the Father and the Father in the Word." <sup>63</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> St. Ambrose, De fide, III, 15 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., X, 260).

<sup>60</sup> St. Basil, Letter 52.

<sup>61</sup> Eusebius, Letter 1, no. 7 (P. G., XX, 1541).

<sup>62</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 439.

<sup>63</sup> St. Athanasius, Epistle in Defense of the Nicene Definition, sec. 20 (Oxford

In other words, the absolute divinity of the Son, the absolute unity of God, and the absolute distinction of the two persons in one identical nature were solemnly declared.

The seductiveness of Arius' heresy lay in its attempt to make more understandable both the unity of God and the person of Christ. What it really did was to undermine both mysteries, safeguarding the dogma of the divine unity only by a gross equivocation, and simplifying the idea of Christ only by stripping Him of His divinity. One single word, ὁμοούσιος (consubstantial), properly understood and profoundly examined, when applied to the Word and to God the Father, reëstablished the traditional faith in its purity. Jesus Christ the Word of God, consubstantial with His Father, remained the ineffable object of mankind's adoration. Jesus Christ, truly man, who died on the cross, remained friend and brother, bearing all our miseries. The consubstantiality was always a great mystery, but one that helped to explain all the other mysteries, one that spoke to the heart.

Over this word "consubstantial" long strife would take place. This fact sometimes surprises us. But we can understand the magnitude of these disputes when we reflect upon the incalculable import of this simple word.

Five bishops (Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Theonas of Marmarica, and Secundus of Ptolemais) remained obstinate to the very end. They openly ridiculed the proposed term. All the other members of the Council accepted the use of the word δμοούσιος to express the fundamental relationship of the Son with the Father. Hosius and Athanasius then drew up the celebrated Nicene Creed.

Library of Fathers, vol. 8); Epistle to Serapion, III, 5 f.; De Synodis, nos. 39, 42, 48-54.

<sup>64</sup> Socrates, op. cit., I, 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> St. Athanasius credits the Bishop of Cordova with a considerable influence in the formulation of the symbol. (*History of the Arians*, chap. 49.) But St. Hilary says that St. Athanasius was its author (*Fragments*, II, 33).

It was read in general session by the deacon Hermogenes, secretary of the Council and future bishop of Caesarea, <sup>66</sup> and was acclaimed by an almost unanimous vote of the Fathers.

### The Nicene Creed

This symbol of Nicaea reads as follows: 67

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only-begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of the same substance with the Father (ὁμοούσιον τφ  $\pi \alpha \tau \rho i$ ), by whom all things were made in heaven and in earth, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, was incarnate, was made man, suffered, rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, and He will come to judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost." The symbol then terminates with the following anathema: "Those who say, There was a time when He was not, and He was not before He was begotten, and He was made of nothing (i. e., He was created), or who say that He is of another hypostasis or of another substance (than the Father), or that the Son of God is created, that He is mutable, or subject to change, the Catholic Church anathematizes." 68

With the exception of Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais, all the bishops finally signed the symbol. But an Arian writer, Philostorgius, reports another subterfuge by Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis, and Maris when the symbol voted by their colleagues was presented to them for their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> St. Basil, Letter 244 (P. G., XXXII, 924). Cf. Tillemont, Mémoires (1782 ed.), VI, 280.

<sup>67</sup> Hefele, I, 294.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> The symbol and the anathema are preserved by Eusebius, Socrates, Gelasius of Cyzicus, and others; P. G., XX, 1540; LXVII, 60 f.; Mansi, II, 916. Later we will note the successive additions to this symbol, which gave it the form which the Church now uses in the mass.

signatures. Perceiving that by the addition of a single letter the meaning of the word ὁμοούσιος (consubstantial) would be altered, they inserted in the middle of the word a scarcely perceptible iota. Thus the word ὁμοούσιος (of the same substance), became ὁμοιούσιος (of like substance). By this trickery they escaped the anathema and exile, which were imposed on the two recalcitrant bishops. But they did not escape the contempt of their two friends, who bitterly reproached them for their lack of firmness. It is related that the Bishop of Ptolemais addressed the Bishop of Nicomedia in these words: "Eusebius, you signed so as not to be banished; but in less than a year you will share our misfortune." Whether the anecdote be true or not, the orthodox never considered the signatures of the three bishops as sincere. This act may not have filled their life with remorse, but it did cover their memory with shame.

#### The Banishment of Arius

As soon as the symbol was reported to the Emperor, he was jubilant over it. Socrates tells us that "Constantine terms the decision of all those who were assembled there the will of God, and does not doubt that the unanimity of so many eminent bishops was effected by the Holy Spirit." <sup>71</sup> He immediately exiled Arius, the two bishops who refused to sign, and all the priests who were connected with them. <sup>72</sup> He ordered the writings of Arius and those of the heresiarch's friends to be burned. It seems also that he threatened with death all persons who concealed any of those writings. <sup>73</sup>

After imposing these sanctions, Constantine probably

<sup>69</sup> Philostorgius, Supplement, P. G., LXV, 624.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>71</sup> Socrates, I, 9.

<sup>72</sup> Philostorgius, loc. cit.

<sup>78</sup> Constantine's letter ordering this measure is of dubious authenticity. Cf. Hefele, I, 297.

thought the Arian controversy was forever at an end. But it had only started. At the very moment these severe measures were being carried out, the scheming Eusebius of Nicomedia was considering fresh plans to revive the conflict and to bring about the rehabilitation of Arius.

#### The Meletian Schism

Among the heresiarch's supporters were to be found some disciples of Meletius. The Council of Nicaea had been convoked, not only to settle the dispute about the Word of God, but also to end the Meletian Schism.

In the year 304 or 305,<sup>74</sup> while Bishop Peter of Alexandria was absent and while four other Egyptian bishops were in prison for the faith, Meletius, bishop of Lycopolis (in Egypt), despite protests by the lawful pastors, interfered in the governing of their dioceses. He performed ordinations there, in utter disregard of the most explicit ecclesiastical regulations.<sup>75</sup> St. Athanasius and Socrates mention also that Meletius was accused of sacrificing to idols during the persecution. But, on this point, Socrates seems merely to be copying Athanasius, who records what was probably a false rumor.<sup>76</sup>

It is beyond question, however, that the Bishop of Lycopolis, not satisfied with openly violating the precise regulations of canon law, contemptuously ignored the complaints of the four imprisoned bishops, refused to deal with them or with Bishop Peter, and, after Peter's martyrdom, went to Alexandria and there allied himself with Arius. He excommunicated the episcopal visitors who had been appointed by the martyr bishop, and ordained two others. Thus he became the center of a group

<sup>74</sup> For a discussion of this date, see Hefele, I, 347.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 478. This Meletian schism should not be confused with one that broke out at Antioch half a century later.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> The documents in support of this view are set forth and discussed by Hefele, *Councils*, I. 345 f.

of malcontents who continually grew in number and were organized by him into a veritable hierarchical church.

At the time when the Council of Nicaea began its sessions, the Meletians in Egypt counted twenty-nine bishops. In Alexandria they had four priests and three deacons. On account of the number of its members, its organization, the stubbornness of its leader, and its close relation with the Arians, the Meletian Schism took on the appearance of a serious danger. The Council promptly turned its attention to this question, especially since Constantine, who was always suspicious of movements that threatened disorder, requested the Fathers to make the peace of the Church their principal aim.

The Emperor's chief anxiety was for the outward good order of the Church. The bishops of the Council, however, placed the sacred interests of the faith ahead of all other considerations. As the Meletians did not deny any doctrine, the Council acted leniently toward them. To manifest its desire for conciliation and peace, the Council, after pointing out the grievous wrongs committed by Meletius, decided that the Meletian clergy should be kept in office, but fused with the clergy who had submitted to the Bishop of Alexandria; and they should always be ranked after the clergy ordained by the legitimate bishops, that is, by the bishops in communion with the bishop of Alexandria. Upon the death of one of these latter bishops, his place might be given to one of the Meletian clergy, but through a regular election and with the approval of the bishop of Alexandria. The sixth canon of the Council says: "The ancient order of things established in Egypt should be preserved, that is, the bishop of Alexandria should continue to exercise authority over the other bishops."

As regards Meletius, the promoter of the schism, his incorrigible habit of meddling everywhere and sowing disorder was well known. He was permitted to retain his episcopal title

<sup>77</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia contra Arianos, chap. 72

and to remain in the city of Lycopolis where he had been bishop. But he was deprived of all episcopal authority. He was forbidden to ordain or make clerical appointments there and he was not allowed to go to the environs or to any other city for a similar purpose.<sup>78</sup>

Conformable to the Council's decision, Meletius lived in Lycopolis. But, immediately after the death of Bishop Alexander, Eusebius of Nicomedia eagerly concluded with Meletius a sort of league which would subsequently foment grievous discord in the Church. The Meletian party brought to the Arians the backing of men long accustomed to strife and intrigue. This terrible Meletian party already numbered in its ranks Athanasius' most inveterate enemies: Bishop Callinicus of Pelusium who, later on at the Council of Sardica, stands out as Athanasius' declared adversary, also the hermit Paphnutius <sup>79</sup> and the false priest Ischyras, who became his accusers, and Bishop Arsenius who declared that one of his hands had been cut off by Athanasius.

### The Easter Controversy

In the previous volume of this History, we saw the origin and chief phases of the Easter controversy.<sup>80</sup> It was not in any way related to the Arian question. But the serious disagreement which divided the Churches and which sometimes showed itself in the same country and even in the same city, led to continually renewed disputes. It profoundly disturbed Christian communities and at times even made them an object of ridicule by the pagans.<sup>81</sup> In its first canon, the Council of Arles ordered that henceforth Easter be celebrated "at the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Socrates, op. cit., I, 9; Theodoret, op. cit., I, 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> He should not be confused with a bishop of the same name who, at the Council of Nicaea, defended the marriage of priests.

<sup>80</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 227, 291 ff., 433, 515.

<sup>81</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 5; St. Epiphanius, Haereses, LXX, 14.

same time, on the same day throughout the world." Evidently this decision was framed with a view to make the Roman custom prevail everywhere. But the Fathers of the Council purposely employed a vague formula so as not to wound the dissident Churches by too great exactness. For most of these latter the canon was a dead letter. Nothing but the decision of an ecumenical council would bring about uniformity.

It has often been repeated that the bishops at Nicaea decreed "that the feast of Easter henceforth be celebrated on the Sunday following the full moon after the spring equinox." This is indeed the rule that little by little came to be followed throughout the Church, but the Nicene Council did not make such a precise decision. It simply decreed, as we read in the Synodal Letter to the Church of Alexandria, as follows:

"All our brethren in the East who formerly followed the custom of the Jews are henceforth to celebrate the said most sacred feast of Easter at the same time with the Romans and yourselves and all those who have observed Easter from the beginning." 82

Constantine wrote a long letter to all those who were present at the Council. With his usual emphasis, he says in this letter:

"It was resolved that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day. We have it in our power to

82 For a long time our only document on this question was a letter from the Council to the Church of Alexandria, quoted by Socrates (op. cit., I, 9). But the very text of the decree has been discovered in a work known as the Book of the Fifty Titles; of this work we possess two manuscripts: one, coming from Mount Athos, is now in the Bibliothèque nationale at Paris; the other belongs to the Vatican Library. The former manuscript was published by Cardinal Pitra in his Spicilegium Solesmense, IV, 541. From this document we learn that, regarding the purely disciplinary question of the date of Easter, the most traditional rule is that the Church should celebrate this feast unanimously, on the same day. Provided it is Rome that determines this date, even though altering the established custom when occasion arises, and provided the faithful of the whole world all conform thereto, the desire expressed by the Council of Nicaea will continue to be realized. In this sense was conceived and should be understood an important letter from Cardinal Rompolla (Secretary of State of Leo XIII) to Father Tondini, May 6, 1897. This letter may be found in Les Questions actuelles, XXXV, 248-252.

prolong the due observance of this ordinance to future ages, by a truer order [than the Jewish practice], which we have preserved from the very day of the Passion until the present time. . . . Our Savior has left us one feast in commemoration of our deliverance, I mean the day of His most holy Passion; and He had willed that His Catholic Church should be one." 83

The Nicene decision did not remove every divergence in the celebration of Easter. St. Epiphanius informs us that in his time (about the year 400), there were still many "Quartodecimans," that is, Christians who celebrated Easter in the Jewish manner on 14th Nisan, no matter what day of the week that might be.84 He says further that a sect of these Quartodecimans, called Audians (from Audius,85 the name of their leader, a man of original mind and strict piety), combined certain odd beliefs with practices of praiseworthy asceticism. For instance, they had an anthropomorphic idea of God, declaring that man's likeness to God was in his body as well as in his soul.86 The sect originated in Mesopotamia. The laws of Emperors Theodosius II and Valentinian III prove that the Audians still existed in the fifth century. Theodoret describes the curious fashion in which they forgave sins. In the sixth century they completely disappear.

## Disciplinary Canons

By condemning Arianism, by attempting to put an end to the Meletian Schism, and by making more precise the regulation about the celebration of Easter, the Nicene Fathers tried to ward off three great perils that were threatening the Church at the beginning of the fourth century. They wished to cure

<sup>88</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 18.

<sup>84</sup> St. Epiphanius, Haereses, no. 50.

<sup>85</sup> St. Ephraim calls him Udo, a name which in Syriac means "owl." St. Ephraim, Sermon 24.

<sup>86</sup> St. Epiphanius, Haereses, no. 70. Cf. Hefele, I, 334-341.

other abuses and for this purpose enacted a number of disciplinary canons which have long been a matter of dispute among scholars. A regard for the mighty work accomplished by "the great council," as the Synod of Nicaea at once came to be called, so filled the popular mind that people attributed to that Council all the more important reforms that were accomplished after it.

Hefele gives another reason for the confusion that long prevailed on this subject. He says:

"We know, indeed, that the canons of various councils were at a very early period collected into one corpus; and in this corpus the canons of Nicaea always had the first place, on account of their importance. It happened afterwards that, either accidentally or designedly, some copyists neglected to give the names of the councils to those canons which followed the Nicene. We have already seen that even at Rome there was a copy containing *sub uno titulo* the canons of Nicaea and those of Sardica. When these copies were circulated in the East, that which might have been foreseen took place in course of time; *viz.*, from a want of the spirit of criticism, all the later canons which followed after the true canons were attributed to the Council of Nicaea." <sup>87</sup>

Today only twenty canons are regarded as authentic. The original text, inserted in Mansi's collection,<sup>88</sup> may be found, with a translation and scholarly commentary, in Hefele's History of the Councils.<sup>89</sup>

The purpose of some of these canons is merely to make more exact certain ancient regulations that were not well understood or well observed. Thus canons 1, 2, 9, and 10 exclude from sacred orders those who have mutilated themselves, as also the neophytes and penitents. Canon 17 forbids "any bishop, presbyter, deacon, or any one of the clergy whatever, to have

<sup>87</sup> Hefele, I, 367.

<sup>88</sup> Mansi, II, 668 f.

<sup>89</sup> Hefele, I, 375-434.

a subintroducta 90 dwelling with him, except only a mother or sister or aunt or such persons only as are beyond all suspicion." 91

Another category of canons regulates special situations brought about by the recent crises which the Church had undergone from persecutions and heresies. Canons 11 to 14 determine the penitential conditions to be imposed upon the *lapsi* and *relapsi* of the last persecution of Licinius. Articles 8 and 19 concern the probation required of Novatians and followers of Paul of Samosata who might wish to return to the bosom of the Church.

There are five articles about the powers of priests, of ordinary bishops, and of metropolitans or primates. "They form

<sup>90</sup> On the subintroductae, see Mourret, op. cit., I, 435.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Socrates, Sozomen, and Gelasius relate that the Fathers of Nicaea, like those of Elvira (canon 33) wished to enact a law regarding celibacy. This law would have forbidden all bishops, priests, and deacons, who were already married before their ordination, to continue living with their wives. But a very remarkable man, Bishop Paphnutius of Upper Egypt, said that too heavy a yoke should not be imposed on the clergy, that an absolute prohibition might endanger the virtue of the cleric's wife, who would be tempted to seek in a sinful way the satisfaction which theretofore she had licitly obtained. Paphnutius' speech was the more effective since he himself had always lived in the strictest continence. The scars of wounds which he had received for the faith made him venerable in the eyes of all. Several times Constantine had kissed the scar of that eve which Paphnutius lost during the persecution of Maximinus. The Fathers of Nicaea, regardful of these weighty words, instead of enacting the intended law, merely used the vague expression of article 3; evidently its spirit was to recommend the practice of continence, though it did not explicitly refer to the cleric's wife; it forbade him to have living with him any woman who was not beyond all suspicion. The reported speech of Paphnutius agrees well with the practice of celibacy in the Greek Church. The Latin Church already had clearly adopted the proposed practice. They would not yet venture to extend it to the whole Church. But the spirit of the Church was clear. The wording of article 3, so conformable to the spirit of continence, is most significant on the part of an assembly of bishops, who were mostly Eastern. Thomassin, basing his view on passages of St. Epiphanius, St. Jerome, Eusebius, and St. Chrysostom, holds that article 3 was interpreted practically, even in the East, as meaning that the married clergy were to give up all marital relations with their wives. (Thomassin, Ancienne et nouvelle discipline, part 1, bk, 2, chap, 60, nos. 15 f.) But this interpretation can hardly be reconciled with the texts of the fifth and twenty-fifth Apostolic canons, the fourth canon of the Council of Gangra, and the thirteenth canon of the Council of Trullo.

a little code of Catholic hierarchy in five articles, forming not the least important work of the Council." 92

We know that, from the beginning of Christianity, custom attached a particular preëminence to certain Churches. In this number were the Churches of Antioch and Alexandria. The Council explicitly confirmed their authority. Canon 4 decides that a bishop should be chosen by all the bishops of his province and that the metropolitan should have the right of approving or rejecting the choice. Canon 6 declares "the ancient customs should be observed, notably those concerning Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, that the bishop of Alexandria should have jurisdiction over all these provinces, since it is a rule established by the bishops of Rome that the preëminences be observed in the Church." 93 "Thus," says an eminent scholar commenting on this text, "the Church of Rome confirmed the jurisdiction of the Churches of Alexandria and Antioch and, by guaranteeing individual primacies, affirmed its own universal primacy." 94

The Council adds a sentence that appears to be a sort of amendment to the fourth canon. It was approved by the Fathers after the text of the canon had already been agreed upon. This sentence reads: "Likewise the ancient rights of the Churches of Antioch and the other provinces should be preserved." Canon 7 solves a special difficulty that arose regarding the successors of the bishops of Jerusalem. Since the destruction of the Holy City and the building of a new city on its ruins by Emperor Hadrian, the bishops of Jerusalem bore the title of bishop of Aelia Capitolina and yielded precedence to the bishop of Caesarea. The Council makes the following declaration: "Since custom and ancient tradition

<sup>92</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain, II, 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> This is a translation of the version which Leclercq proposes, by comparing the Greek texts with Syriac and Coptic manuscripts. Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, I, 554 note.

<sup>94</sup> Ibidem.

have prevailed that the bishop of Aelia [i. e., Jerusalem] should be honored, let him, saving its due dignity to the Metropolis, have the next place of honor." 95 These hierarchical regulations are completed by canons 15 and 16, which forbid the clergy to go from one place to another for the purpose of escaping from their rightful jurisdiction, and remind deacons that a great distance separates them from priests.

#### Constantine's Attitude

The Emperor could not restrain his joy at sight of the accomplishment of so many labors that were calculated to promote peace and order. Even before the end of the Council's sessions, by way of celebrating his twentieth year as emperor, he held a great festivity to which he invited all the bishops who were present at the Council. He gave them a banquet that excelled imagination in its magnificence. As the prelates passed by, the imperial guard presented arms. Eusebius relates that the bishops, seeing the gleam of drawn swords extended towards them, no longer as a threat, but by way of honoring them, said that "the scene was less like reality, than a dream." <sup>96</sup>

Constantine, seeing himself encompassed by so many prelates, who had assembled from all quarters of his Empire, was proud of this great Council, which he looked upon as his work. And he was charmed with the praise heaped upon him by Eusebius in an eloquent panegyric. The Emperor went from bishop to bishop, kissing the confessors' scars, 97 complimenting certain bishops, and repeatedly saying: "You are bishops whose jurisdiction is within the Church; I also am a bishop,

<sup>95</sup> Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., XIV, 17.

<sup>96</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 15.

<sup>97</sup> Theodoret, I, II; Socrates, I, II.

ordained by God to overlook whatever is external to the Church." 98

In the years that followed, Constantine let himself be seduced by this dazzle of his self-conceit. Throughout his life he vigorously defended the Nicene faith. But often he appeared to be defending something of his own rather than something of God. He took his office of "bishop in externals" too literally. So illusive may the proper limits become in these matters, that at times he even attempted to meddle in "internal affairs" to the detriment of the Church.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Eusebius, op. cit., IV, 24. Eusebius places these words on the lips of Constantine when the latter was giving a dinner to some bishops; but he does not indicate the date. With great probability it has been supposed that the words were used during this great festivity at Nicaea. That surely was the day when the great emperor would have been tempted to boast of this title of "bishop in externals."

#### CHAPTER III

## Eusebius of Nicomedia and St. Athanasius (325-337)

### Eusebius' Plan

THE authority of the universal Church, manifesting itself in the most imposing solemnity that the world until then ever witnessed, had anathematized Arianism. The terms of the condemnation left no room for evasion. Emperor Constantine, the supreme master of the East and the West, placed his formidable imperial power at the unqualified service of orthodoxy. One man, however, did not give up hope of making Arius' cause triumphant. This man was the astute Eusebius of Nicomedia. He knew Constantine. And he knew that the great emperor's loftiness of view and generosity of devotion were not always accompanied by perseverance in carrying out his plans. Moreover, Constantine was not well versed in the study of theological doctrines, nor did he always grasp their import. In fact, he was more concerned about assuring good order in the realm than he was about maintaining the purity of faith in souls.

Eusebius, being a sharp observer, also knew the strangely mixed ecclesiastical world of the fourth century. There were confessors bearing on their bodies the marks of wounds they received for the faith. And there were ambitious men, ever ready to follow whatever direction the Emperor's inclination would take. Then, too, there were utopian dreamers with vague doctrines, men who were imbued with Origenist and subordinationist ideas.<sup>1</sup> To inject into this world, under cover

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> That is, placing the Son and the Holy Ghost in subordination to the Father. See Mourret, op. cit., I, 342.

of the imperial authority, an equivocally expressed doctrine with a semi-Arian foundation, did not seem to Eusebius an undertaking beyond the resources of his wile and scheming. To succeed, he must win Constantine: for this he would find valuable assistance in his relations with the near kin of the Emperor. Opinions would have to be changed. In the wreckage of the old schisms and the old heresies, ready accomplices would be found. But it was of the first importance that the good standing of Athanasius be ruined. To this task the Bishop of Nicomedia devotes his greatest personal efforts.

The first step he took seemed utterly to ruin his scheme. Two or three months after the Council, certain followers of Meletius, affected by the recent decisions of the Council, appealed to the Emperor's arbitration to settle some affair which the historian Eusebius refers to in vague terms.<sup>2</sup> These Egyptian Meletians might be of considerable help in the campaign which Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea planned to carry on in favor of Arius. Not only did Eusebius and Theognis welcome the petitioners, but openly favored them. And they haughtily pleaded in their behalf. But so great boldness was their ruin.

## Exile of Eusebius

Constantine was annoyed by these tricks. Recalling Eusebius' former attachment to Licinius, the Emperor's rival, he ordered the arrest of the two bishops and banished them to Gaul. Then he wrote to their two Churches, directing them to choose new bishops. His letter to the Church of Nicomedia was terrible in its denunciation of Eusebius. Unmindful that he had pardoned the Bishop of Nicomedia for his close association with Licinius, he warned the people against

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 23.

"Eusebius, the coöperator in the cruelty of the tyrants. For that he was the agent of the tyrants has been clearly shown. . . . I shall not here give an account of my own wrongs, the seditions excited, or the spies employed against me. There is one thing which grieves me, that you are influenced by the doctrines of Eusebius, and have thus been led away from truth." <sup>8</sup>

So complete and sudden a change would have disconcerted anyone else. But Eusebius continued his intrigues from his distant place of exile. Perhaps his being so far away merely served the better to conceal his activity in a campaign in which he continued to be the leader.<sup>4</sup>

The clever plan of the Eusebians, as revealed by historical documents, was the following: they would not pose as opponents of the Nicene Council, which the Emperor defended as his own work; they would not take a stand as friends of Arius; but they would fuse themselves with a large mixed party, made up of all the malcontents that could be grouped together, a party in which pure Arians would not be numerous but which they would secretly direct; <sup>5</sup> they would not yet attack the deacon Athanasius, whose popularity was immense, but only the most vulnerable of his friends. This scheme of clever dissimulation was favored by the exile of the Bishop of Nicomedia, which left in the front rank of his party his relative of Caesarea, a docile tool in his hands, but a man who stood in high favor with the Emperor.

## Eusebius of Caesarea

In the third party at the Council, whereas Eusebius of Nicomedia was a connecting link with the pure Arians, Eusebius of Caesarea represented the spirit of conciliation with

<sup>3</sup> Theodoret, I, 19 (alias 20).

<sup>4</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 37 f.

the group that followed the lead of Athanasius. His loyalty to the Emperor had never faltered. At great functions, he it was who always delivered, in the Emperor's presence, those pompous discourses in which the imperial majesty was exalted even to hyperbole. Eusebius of Caesarea readily signed the Creed adopted by the majority of the conciliar Fathers, but with misgivings as to the Sabellian interpretations that might be given to the word *homoousios*.

#### St. Eustathius

One of the most earnest friends of Athanasius, one of the most vigorous defenders of the homoousios at the Nicene Council, Eustathius of Antioch, was supposed to lean toward the Sabellian error. But the suspicion seems to have been ill founded. What was really dreaded in him was his ardor in combating the Arian doctrines in the provinces of Celesyria, Mesopotamia, and the two Cilicias, where he was charged with the execution of the conciliar decisions. St. John Chrysostom relates that Eustathius sent orthodox teachers and learned controversialists to the most threatened cities. He issued many refutations of the heresy in the form of tracts, sermons, letters, and exegetical commentaries. St. Athanasius informs us that Eustathius expelled from the ranks of his clergy all its members who were suspect. Most of these were later made bishops to strengthen the Arian party. But the hour had not

<sup>6&</sup>quot;I do not see that what we possess of Eustathius' works gives any foundation for this charge. He strongly affirms the full divinity of the Word, but he also sets forth the distinction between the Word and the Father." Cavallera, Le Schisme d'Antioche, p. 38 note. As to Eustathius' theology, see a lengthy note in Dupin, New History of Ecclesiastical Writers, II, 21 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Gelasius, Actorum concilii Nicaeni commentarius, II, 27.

<sup>8</sup> St. Chrysostom, Laudatio sancti Eustathii, no. 3.

<sup>9</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, Part I, chap. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ibidem. Among the bishops we can name Leontius and Stephen of Antioch, George of Laodicea, Theodore of Tripoli, Eudoxius of Germanicia, and Eustathius of Sebaste.

come for them to disclose their real intent. Eustathius wrote or uttered some vigorous statement to refute Arianism, and Eusebius of Caesarea used the statement as a basis for accusing him of Sabellianism, *i. e.*, of confounding the three Persons of the Trinity with one another.<sup>11</sup> A sharp exchange of letters followed between the two bishops. These doctrinal accusations were succeeded by others of a political nature. Eustathius was charged with a lack of dutiful respect to the Emperor's mother.<sup>12</sup> The ground was well chosen for the campaign which the Bishop of Nicomedia undertook. And it was pursued relentlessly.

We have now come to the year 328. Constantine extended his clemency to the Bishop of Nicomedia and recalled him from exile. This move seems to have been suggested by Princess Constantia, the Emperor's sister, who was still devoted to her former confidant and adviser. It may be she took advantage of the great festivities celebrated that very year in honor of the martyr St. Lucian of Antioch to ask the Emperor to pardon Eusebius, who claimed to be one of the martyr's most faithful disciples.<sup>13</sup>

The Bishop of Nicomedia took possession of his see again. But he devoted himself chiefly to organizing the campaign against Eustathius. Knowing well that trickery was the weapon he could employ most expertly, he contrived a snare. In a petition full of flattery, he begged Constantine for per-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Socrates, op. cit., I, 23.

<sup>12</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, Part I, chap. 4. "In this there may well have been a foundation of truth. Helena visited the East in the time of Eustathius. We know that she had a great devotion to St. Lucian, the celebrated priest of Antioch. . . . She built a magnificent basilica in his honor. He had left a memory in Antioch which was the subject of controversy; the Arians held him in great veneration; their adversaries were less enthusiastic. It is quite possible that on this subject Eustathius may have let fall some indiscreet words." (Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 129.)

<sup>18</sup> Batisfol, Études d'hagiographie arienne, La passion de saint Lucien d'Antioche, in the Report of the Congrès scientifique des catholiques, 1891, 2d section, pp. 181-184.

mission to visit the magnificent buildings in course of construction at Jerusalem through the Emperor's piety. He first went to Antioch, accompanied by Theognis of Nicaea, and visited Eustathius, who gave him a fraternal welcome. After leaving Eustathius with every appearance of friendliness, he traveled through Palestine and Syria, gathering together all his followers, including Eusebius of Caesarea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, and Aetius of Lydda. These he brought to Antioch, declaring that serious charges against Eustathius called for prompt solution by a synod. And a fresh denunciation was added. The private morals of the Bishop of Antioch were to be the subject of inquiry. A hastily convened synod pronounced Eustathius' deposition in his own city.14 Theodoret, reporting the affair, says that soon afterwards the infamous creature who had dared calumniate Eustathius made a retractation during a grievous illness and declared that she had been hired by the Eusebians.<sup>15</sup> By that time, however, the decisions of the Synod of Antioch were already executed. Constantine had exiled the falsely accused insulter of his mother to Trajanopolis in Thrace, then to Philippi, where he died shortly after. 16 But this Eustathius would one day be honored by the Church as a saint.17

The following year (330) Euphronius, an avowed follower of the Bishop of Nicomedia, was chosen, not without some commotion, in place of Eustathius. He was installed in the see of Antioch in the presence of a representative of the Emperor. The most active of Athanasius' friends thus disappeared from the field of battle, and the important see of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Duchesne, after summing up these details, says: "All this is very doubtful and reads like legend." Op. cit., II, 129. But such is not the opinion of Cavallera, who makes a careful examination of the documents and holds them to be authentic. (Cavallera, Le Schisme d'Antioche, pp. 56-61.)

<sup>15</sup> Theodoret, Ecclesiastical History, I, 20 (alias 21).

<sup>16</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, Part I, chap. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Acta sanctorum, July, IV, 136.

Antioch was in the hands of the Eusebians. The schemes of the Bishop of Nicomedia were crowned with complete success.

## St. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria

Events in Egypt did not follow the same course. Alexander, the holy bishop of Alexandria, died on April 17, 328, after expressing a desire that the deacon Athanasius should be his successor. The faithful acclaimed this choice, the orthodox bishops of the province ratified it, and the consecration of the new bishop took place on June 7, amidst the ovations of a whole people, who kept repeating: "Athanasius! Athanasius! He is a good Christian. He is an ascetic. He is a real bishop." 19

Athanasius was only thirty years old. "In addition to his gifts as an experienced pastor, God had endowed him with a clear intellect and a wide vision of Christian tradition, of current events, and of men; and with all this, he possessed a character of absolutely undaunted courage, tempered by perfect sweetness of manner, but incapable of weakening before anything or anybody. The orthodoxy of Nicaea had found its representative. Already threatened at this time, it was soon to pass through many terrible crises. At certain times, it seemed to have no other support but Athanasius. But that was enough. Athanasius had against him the Empire, its police, the councils, and the episcopate; the parties were still equally balanced, while such a man stood firm." <sup>20</sup>

The new patriarch's first Easter letter to his people pointed out the threatening danger and referred to the intrigues of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Not all the bishops were as enthusiastic about it as were the people. Some of them were fearful that in electing Athanasius they were giving themselves a master. See Bardy, *Saint Athanase*, pp. 50 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Sozomen, II, 17; St. Athanasius, *Apologia contra Arianos*, no. 6. We know that, according to tradition and the canons, when a Church lost its bishop, the neighboring bishops met to elect a successor; they took account of the voice of the clergy and people. See Mourret, *op. cit.*, I, 427.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 133.

"heretics." But the principal object of his first pastoral instructions was the edification of his people by the practice of the faith and of the precepts of religion. In this letter he says:

"Let us look upon the priestly trumpets of our Savior, which cry out and call us, at one time to war, as the blessed Paul saith: 'We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities.' . . . At another time the call is made to virginity and self-denial and conjugal harmony, saying, To virgins, the things of virgins; and to those who are married, the things of an honorable marriage." <sup>21</sup>

One of Athanasius' first cares was to visit that cherished part of his diocese where the purest spirit of the Gospel was flourishing among groups of hermits. The Syriac preface to his Easter Letters speaks of his journeys to the Thebaid, Pentapolis, the Ammon oasis, and the lower districts,<sup>22</sup> as though he were reviewing his choicest troops on the eve of the great battle he was about to wage against Arianism. Bishops and throngs of people accompanied him. When he was approaching the Said, St. Pachomius with his religious came forth to meet him, singing Psalms.<sup>23</sup> Between the saintly patriarch and the great lawgiver of the cenobitical life there

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "It was an ancient custom of the bishops of Alexandria to send an annual letter to the churches of their dioceses. Such communications were known as Festal Letters, and were usually issued after Epiphany. They announced the date of Easter and the beginning of the preparatory fast; they also contained instructions concerning the Easter festival or other matters. . . . The original text of those composed by Athanasius has been lost, apart from some fragments. In 1847 a collection of these letters in Syriac was found in a monastery of the Nitrian desert; they were edited by Cureton in 1848. Cureton's manuscript was a mutilated one, and contained only fifteen entire letters, of the years 329–348. (Bardenhewer, Patrology, pp. 156, 258.) The Latin translation of the Festal Letters of St. Athanasius has been placed in Migne's Patrologia Graeca (XXVI, 1351 ff.). On the basis of the preface to these letters it has been possible to determine several dates in the life of St. Athanasius.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> P. G., XXVI, 1352.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Histoire de saint Pakhôme et de ses communautés, previously unpublished Coptic and Arabic documents, published and translated by Amelineau in the Revue du Musée Guimet, XVII (1889), 384 f.

were formed holy bonds which common strife against heresy would strengthen. The practice of the sternest virtues of the religious life prepared these monks to become intrepid champions of orthodoxy. Henceforth Pachomius shared all the joys and trials of the holy Patriarch, calling him "the Father of the orthodox faith," <sup>24</sup> "a Christopher" or "one who bears God." <sup>25</sup> At the close of Pachomius' life, among the farewell words addressed to his beloved brethren we hear him repeating: "In this world I have known three things that gratified God and flourished in Him: first, the holy Father Athanasius, who fought for the orthodox faith until his very death; secondly, the great Antony, who left us the model of his religious life; and thirdly, that dear community, which advances in the footsteps of those two fathers, under the commands of God." <sup>26</sup>

### Attacks on St. Athanasius

After this journey, the Patriarch returned to Alexandria full of heavenly consolations, to resume possession of his episcopal see. The storm had already burst. The followers whom Arius left in the Egyptian capital were all stirred up. They contested the validity of Athanasius' election, maintaining that it was done under the pressure of a concerted popular movement. Eusebius exerted his influence with the Emperor. In a commanding letter—a fragment of which is preserved for us by Athanasius—Constantine ordered the Patriarch, under pain of being exiled himself from his episcopal city, to admit into his communion all those who would present themselves to him.<sup>27</sup>

Athanasius was quick at repartee. He at once drew up, for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 642.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 678.

<sup>27</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia contra Arianos, no. 59.

presentation to Constantine, a memorial in justification of his conduct. But this document was barely written, when the Meletian party, at Eusebius' instigation, entered the campaign. They issued, in rapid succession, a series of mendacious and perfidious accusations to overwhelm the man of God. They charged that he encroached on the imperial powers by levying a contribution upon the faithful of the diocese for the profit of his Church; that he was guilty of high treason for supplying money to a rebel; that Macarius, delegated by Athanasius, undertook to bring back to his duty a certain false priest, Ischyras by name, who was usurping priestly functions, and that the occasion led to a violent scene during which Macarius upset the altar, broke the chalice, and burned the sacred books. This time Athanasius decided to defend himself, not by a written memorial, but in person. He therefore went to Nicomedia and had no difficulty, by a few clear and honest explanations, in dissipating all the calumnies invented against him. He returned to Alexandria bearing a letter in which Constantine calls him "a man of God."

But his enemies did not disarm. Eusebius of Nicomedia was very capable in swaying the populace. He worked the strings in all these plots. He knew that the sort of charge likely to strike the popular imagination and arouse public opinion against a man is not the most plausible accusation, but the most dramatic and startling. The Ischyras affair was taken up again and enriched with new details. And the Meletians openly accused Athanasius with having one of their number (Arsenius, bishop of Hypsele) assassinated. A human hand was paraded through the city as a convincing evidence. A judicial inquiry began. But it came to an abrupt end by the appearance of the supposed victim. Arsenius, paid by Athanasius' enemies, had hidden in a monastery. Athanasius succeeded in tracing his whereabouts, and the poor wretch begged forgiveness from the Bishop of Alexandria. Constantine again

wrote a friendly letter to the Patriarch, and John Arkaph, the leader of the Meletians, in alarm cast himself at the feet of Athanasius.

But this submission was merely a hypocritical maneuver. While the chief of the Meletians was making his apologies before the Patriarch of Alexandria, the latter's sworn enemies were hatching a vast conspiracy against him. The aim was to ruin Athanasius, rehabilitate Arius, and, in this double accomplishment, compromise both the Emperor and the episcopate.

## Eutocius at the Imperial Court

Constantine's unchangeable attachment to the formulas voted at Nicaea was well known. He would not allow them to be called into question. But it was also known how easily he could be deceived as to the meaning and value of those dogmatic formulas.

The ex-empress Constantia, widow of Licinius, was ever devoted to Eusebius' cause. When dying in 333, she recommended to her brother Constantine a priest who was in her confidence, one Eutocius.<sup>28</sup> This priest, who was at once admitted to the Emperor's court, was an easy tool in the hands of the Bishop of Nicomedia. He persuaded Constantine that Arius was not so opposed to the decisions of "the great Council" as people said. Constantine was convinced. Moreover, Athanasius had in vain triumphed over all the accusations made against him: was it not true that, by continually stirring up intrigues around him, he was, whether guilty or not, a cause of disturbance? Under such circumstances, governments more solicitous about maintaining public order than about safeguarding justice lay the blame as readily upon the victim as upon the scoundrels. It is also probable that the Emperor, in his recent conversations with the fearless prelate,

<sup>28</sup> Gelasius, op. cit., III, 12. Cf. Rufinus, I, 2.

noticed in him that firmness of character, the merest signs of which are instinctively dreaded by potentates. At any rate, the priest Eutocius, secret agent of Arius and Eusebius, cultivated these feelings in the Emperor's mind. In 334 Arius, having obtained an audience with the Emperor, offered him a profession of faith cleverly drawn up in vague terms. At first glance it appeared acceptable to Constantine, who immediately decided that Arius should be restored to his ecclesiastical functions and asked the patriarch Athanasius to receive him in his communion. Athanasius' refusal and the Emperor's consequent displeasure were noted by the Eusebian party, who quickly utilized the circumstances to their own advantage.

The time was approaching when Constantine, who had now reached the thirtieth year of his reign, decided to celebrate the event by a great religious solemnity. How better could this feast be enhanced, how better could his cherished aims be assured than by one of those conciliar assemblies which already at Arles and Ancyra and especially at Nicaea had assured both the peace of the Church and the glory of the Emperor? Constantine did not require much urging. He designated the city of Tyre as the meeting-place. The imperial letter of convocation is significant: the task of the Council was to be a work of pacification. If anyone should seek to avoid attending, he would, at need, be constrained to come by force.<sup>29</sup> In this expression everybody saw an allusion to Athanasius' attitude.80 As though to show that the imperial threat was not an empty word, the priest Macarius, a close friend of the Bishop of Alexandria, was brought there in chains. Dionysius, a man of consular rank and high court official, was appointed by Constantine to designate the bishops who should come to the Council, to take the Emperor's place there, and in that

<sup>29</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, IV, 42.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> The previous year (334) a fruitless attempt was made to have Athanasius appear before a synod held at Caesarea.

capacity to maintain good order at it.<sup>31</sup> This time there was no question of Pope Sylvester.

# Council of Tyre (336)

The character of the Council was thus indicated from the start.<sup>32</sup> No doctrinal question was placed on the program, but all the complaints raised against Athanasius were taken up. The Eusebians assumed the role of judges; the part of accusers was taken by the Meletians. The Patriarch of Alexandria had the courage to plead his case before such adversaries. On the gravest of the charges brought against him, that of the assassination of Arsenius, which they had the effrontery to maintain, he was easily victorious. Arsenius was alive and could be seen in his diocese of Hypsele.<sup>88</sup> On some points the accused asked for an investigation. A commission of inquiry was appointed, at a special meeting, not in general session. But at the investigation both sides were not heard. It was conducted under the direction of the prefect of Egypt. No member of the clergy who had submitted to Athanasius was allowed to be present. The holy Bishop found himself confronted by a faction, whose prejudice showed itself only too clearly. He quit the Council, which, immediately after his departure, pronounced sentence of deposition against him.<sup>34</sup>

In vain Athanasius went to Constantinople, where Constantine had then established his imperial residence. The Euse-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Eusebius, loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup> To foil his enemies' plans, Athanasius brought with him fifty Egyptian bishops. But they were barred from the council on the pretext that they had not been summoned.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> According to Rufinus (bk. 10, chap. 18), Athanasius confounded his foes by producing Arsenius before the council.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Most critics question what Rufinus (bk. I, chap. 17) says about a charge of incontinence and its tart refutation. Of this there is no mention either in St. Athanasius' account or in the council's *Acta* which have been preserved. (Mansi, II, 1123 ff.)

bians came there, too. Eusebius of Caesarea, at some festivity in the Emperor's presence, delivered one of those pompous orations in which he was most expert in flattering the sovereign's vanity.<sup>35</sup> Then Athanasius was charged with a new crime, a most unlikely one, indeed, but one well calculated to impress Constantine's self-conceit. The Patriarch of Alexandria had distributed generous alms. He was accused of having bought up the grain supply and attempting to starve Constantinople, the great city so gloriously founded by Constantine, the capital he was so proud of. The Emperor did not even wait for the accused to offer his defense. To cut short all discussion, he ordered Athanasius to be arrested and banished to Gaul, to the city of Treves, where he was interned.<sup>36</sup>

## Marcellus of Ancyra

Would there now be peace? No, indeed; because Constantine, at the same time that he exiled Athanasius, also recalled Arius and his followers. The latter, instead of keeping quiet, profited by their triumph to resume the strife with increased activity.

At the Council of Tyre, conspicuous among the bishops who would not join in the campaign against Athanasius, was Marcellus bishop of Ancyra. In the Council of Nicaea he was seen to be among the most earnest foes of Arius. The doctrinal proceedings which they had not dared institute against Athanasius, whose faultless learning and cogent logic they feared, they resolved to undertake against his friend Marcellus.

With more zeal than theological exactness, Marcellus had defended the consubstantiality of the Word in a book in which the Eusebians claimed to discover Sabellianism, mixed with

<sup>85</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia contra Arianos, no. 9.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., no. 87.

Adoptionism. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, who devoted two books to the refutation of Marcellus,37 the Bishop of Ancyra conceived God as an indivisible Monad, susceptible of a sort of unfolding and folding up again upon itself. This unfolding of the Divinity took place in three ways, and as it were in three distinct periods of time. The Thought of God, or His Word, expanded and was realized outwardly by the production of the world; this was creation. A second and more profound irradiation of the divine Word penetrated human nature itself: this was the Incarnation. A third development of the Word produced the Spirit, which, before Christ's breathing upon the Apostles, was contained in the Word and in the Father, but at that moment, according to Theodoret's expression, became "an extension of the extension." Thus did the Monad expand into the Trinity. But at the end of things, the Word and Spirit would return into the bosom of the Father, as they were there in principle and without ever having constituted veritable Persons.38

It is doubtful that Marcellus' doctrine contained such precise declarations. Almost our whole knowledge of it we get from Eusebius of Caesarea, who was more orator than theologian and who would find it to his advantage to interpret its language in the sense of the Sabellian heresy. As in the case of Eustathius' writings, so those of Marcellus would furnish the Eusebians with an occasion for posing as defenders of tradition against innovating errors.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> The two books Against Marcellus and the Theology of the Church.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> On the doctrine of Marcellus of Ancyra, see Tixeront, *History of Dogmas*, II, 37–41. It is not easy to pass judgment on the doctrine of this bishop, whose life was worthy of veneration. He was defended by the Council of Sardica, Pope Julius I, and St. Athanasius, at least until 344; but it seems that he was compromised by the ideas of his disciple Photinus. Saint Basil, St. Hilary, St. John Chrysostom, and Sulpicius Severus were suspicious of his ideas. Tillemont and especially Petau call him heretical. Natalis Alexander, Montfaucon, and Moehler defend his orthodoxy. On his influence and activity in the Arian controversy, see a lengthy note by Leclercq in Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, II, 841–844.

A synod held at Constantinople in 336 condemned Marcellus of Ancyra and proscribed his writings. The superficial character of the investigation and Marcellus' protests against the interpretation given to his doctrine would later on stir up long quarrels between East and West. But the conciliar decision was none the less another success for the friends of Arius.

They thought of crowning this series of triumphs by a public restoration of their leader into the Catholic communion. The heresiarch was presented to the Alexandrians, perhaps in the secret hope of taking the place left vacant by the banishment of Athanasius. But the hostility of the people, who were deeply attached to their exiled bishop, obliged Arius to withdraw. He then went to Constantinople to the Emperor, declaring to him under oath that he held the pure Catholic faith. Constantine said to him: "If your faith is truly orthodox, you are right in swearing to it. But if your faith is impious, may God judge you for your oath." The Emperor then sent for Alexander, the bishop of Constantinople, and ordered him to receive Arius the next day into his communion.

### Death of Arius

The next day was a Sunday. The Eusebians made ready a grand demonstration, threatening to carry out their plan by force if the clergy offered the least resistance. The holy Bishop then turned to God. Prostrate on the ground, in his church, he was heard saying:

"Lord, let me Thy servant depart and destroy not the pious with the impious. Take off Arius lest, if he enter into the Church, the heresy also may seem to enter with him and henceforward impiety be accounted for piety." <sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> St. Athanasius, Epistle to Serapion (Oxford Library of Fathers, XIII, 212; P. G., XXV, 688).

That very evening Arius was traversing the city accompanied by a numerous following, when, near the Forum of Constantine, a sudden necessity obliged him to seek a secluded spot. Soon he was found there under circumstances that prompted early historians to apply to him the Scriptural words that refer to the traitor Judas: "Diffusa sunt viscera ejus." <sup>40</sup>

St. Athanasius relates that this tragic event opened the eyes of several Arians and that Emperor Constantine was greatly impressed by it.41 The banishment of John Arkaph, leader of the Meletians, who was everywhere sowing disorder, was perhaps an effect of this impression. But the Emperor did not forsake his policy, which seemed to consist in maintaining a balance between the two parties. A touching appeal to the Emperor by St. Antony, the patriarch of the monastic life, asking for the recall of Athanasius, was futile. The death of Bishop Alexander in August 336, during the Emperor's absence, was followed by the election of a devout and learned bishop, named Paul, to the see of Constantinople. But upon Constantine's return, Eusebius of Nicomedia prejudiced him against the newly elected bishop. Paul was banished to Pontus about the end of that year and was replaced by a friend of the Arians.

Thus the Eusebian faction, after eliminating from the combat the three great champions of the Nicene faith—Eustathius, Athanasius, and Marcellus—succeeded in placing one of their own number in the episcopal see of the new capital. But the Nicene symbol remained firm; Constantine never ceased defending it. Arius was able to sue for rehabilitation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Acts 1:18. Such is the account given by St. Athanasius according to the report of the priest Macarius, who was in Constantinople at the time of the event. St. Athanasius, Epistle to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya against the Arians and Epistle to Serapion. (P. G., XXV, 580, 685 ff.; Oxford Library of Fathers, XIII, 147.) Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret relate the same fact, with a few minor variations.

<sup>41</sup> St. Athanasius, Letter to Serapion, concerning the Death of Arius, no. 4; History of the Arians, no. 51.

only by outwardly subscribing to it. And Providence halted the audacious heresiarch at the threshold of the sanctuary by one of those strokes in which even the most lukewarm faith instinctively sees the hand of God.

## Constantine's Last Days

Constantine had reached the sixty-fourth year of his age and the thirty-second of his reign. In that mighty soul, discouragement appeared. He had devoted his genius to the pursuit of two great aims: the unity of the Empire and religious peace. Both of these seemed gravely endangered. A year earlier, at the time of the festive celebration of his thirtieth year as emperor, despairing of preventing strife among his heirs, he divided his empire into three kingdoms. The eldest son, Constantine, was given the provinces located beyond the Alps: Gaul, Britain, and Spain; Constans, the youngest, with the aid of the Caesar Dalmatius, was assigned the government of the center of the Empire: Italy, Africa, and Illyricum; Constantius, the most beloved of the three, aided by the Caesar Hannibalianus, received as his share the entire East. In the religious realm, the Emperor's last acts likewise seemed to establish the existence of two irreconcilable parties. The great reign inaugurated by the victory of the Milvian Bridge and the Edict of Milan ended sadly in the fear of political and religious anarchy.

The thought of death followed Constantine everywhere. At the time of the celebration of his thirtieth year as emperor, he had his tomb constructed in the Church of the Holy Apostles. Eusebius relates that he celebrated the feast of Easter 337 with particular devotion, passing the entire night in that church, close to his tomb. His health was already affected. Feeling the approach of death and of God's judgment,

<sup>42</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, IV, 58.

he probably recalled the crimes that had stained his reign: the murder of his brother-in-law Licinius, of his son Crispus, and of his wife Fausta.43 which had not vet been blotted out by the sacrament of baptism. He may also have blamed himself for his delay in receiving the sacrament that would have made him a Christian.44 A few days later, his ill health became graver; the physicians advised that he go to the city of Helenopolis in Bithynia and take the hot baths. He did go there; but he was too weak to attempt the treatment and simply went to the newly built church. There he prostrated himself, confessing his sins aloud, and asked that, according to the rule laid down by the Council of Elvira, he might receive the imposition of hands. 45 that is, the ceremony that would make him a catechumen. 46 He was then carried to his palace at Aschiron. located in one of the environs of Nicomedia, and thither summoned a number of bishops to be present at the ceremony of his baptism. St. Jerome says that the baptismal rite was performed by Eusebius of Nicomedia. This statement appears to be well founded, since the Emperor was in Eusebius' diocese. Constantine received the sacrament with every sign of deep piety.47 From that moment he refused to wear the im-

<sup>43</sup> On these murders, see De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, II, 97-133.

<sup>44</sup> Such a delay in receiving baptism was at that time not so unusual or surprising as it would be now. Eusebius (op. cit., bk. 4, chap. 57) says that the reason given by the Emperor for these delays was that he wished to receive baptism in the Jordan River. At least this was his pretext. St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, and St. Martin were baptized comparatively late in life.

<sup>45</sup> Eusebius, op. cit., IV, 61.

<sup>46</sup> Canon 39 of the Council of Elvira says: "Gentiles, si in infirmitate desider-averint sibi manus imponi, si fuerit eorum ex aliqua parte honesta vita, placuit eis manum imponi et fieri christianos."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> The fact of Constantine's baptism on his death-bed is attested by St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, Eusebius, and the Council of Rimini. No one any longer maintains the story of the Emperor's baptism by Pope St. Sylvester, an account which was contested by Papebroch in the *Acta sanctorum*, May, vol. 5. On this question, see De Smedt, *Principes de la critique historique*, pp. 137–159; *Liber pontificalis* (Duchesne), I, cix-cxx, 170–201. The question has been raised whether the form

perial purple, and he prepared for death. On May 22, 337, he appeared before Him whose precepts he had not always followed, but whose law he had cherished, whose ministers he had honored, and whose Church he had defended, giving it that freedom and respect to which it has a right.

In short, Constantine's reign had been exceptionally favorable to the Church. Not only did it free the Church from persecution, but it permitted the Christian apostolate to spread freely to the utmost limits of the Empire; it enabled Christian literature to flourish without hindrance; and it allowed Christian worship to expand in all the magnificence of its ceremonies and its temples. And it infused the Christian spirit into the laws.

## Christianity and Roman Law

Some legists date the decadence of Roman law from Constantine, because the great Emperor's legislation disturbed the scholarly logic of that law. Assuredly the old law of Rome, such as was made by enactments, plebiscites, magistrates' decrees, the "replies of the prudent," the "senatus consultus," and imperial constitutions, from a certain point of view may be regarded as the result of the greatest effort which human reason had attempted before the appearance of Christianity. The genius of eminent jurisconsults, such as Ulpian and Gaius, had made it a monument in wonderful architectural form. But, if we consider the excellence of Roman law to have been expressed by that architecture, with the iron law of the Twelve Tables as its basis, we must trace its decadence further back than Constantine. The change dates from that equitable jurisprudence of the praetors who, by countless artifices, interpreted the old formulas in a spirit of clemency,

of baptism used by the semi-Arian Eusebius was valid. But the form used is unknown to us. On this point, see the article in the *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne* (I, 2818) regarding the rebaptism of Arians received into the Church.

gradually humanized the organization of the family and of property, and broadened the right to judge human contracts according to circumstances, and not in accord with the strict letter of their wording.

This tendency to equity, the complement of strict justice, was confirmed and completed by the spirit of Christianity and was progressively codified by the Christian emperors, especially by Constantine. We may say that, by thus making the law flexible, Christianity saved it. As an eminent historian remarks, "Christianity could save the Roman law only by modifying it, suiting it to the new needs of the world. The praetor still left much to be done by the Gospel. Equity is not enough. Mercy is needed, that justice may not weigh too heavily upon human weakness." <sup>48</sup>

By broadening the jurisconsults' right of interpretation <sup>49</sup> and by amplifying the juridical effects of custom,<sup>50</sup> Constantine broke the architectural lines of the old Roman law, but he humanized it. By elevating the dignity of women, children, and slaves,<sup>51</sup> he undermined its most ancient foundations, but he Christianized it. As Schlegel says:

"The Roman jurisprudence, as it deals in rigid formulas and adheres to the strict letter, inclines more towards rigid and absolute law. But human justice should necessarily be mild, indulgent, qualified by circumstances." <sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., II, 275 f. On the Christianizing of Roman law by the Christian emperors, especially by Constantine, see Ozanam, History of Civilization in the Fifth Century, vol. I, chap. 5. See also De Broglie, op. cit., II, 269-274, 446-448; Troplong, Influence du christianisme sur le droit civil des Romains. An article in L'Ami du clergé (November 30, 1913) summarizes the conclusions reached in these studies, as likewise the more recent works of three Italian scholars—Ferrini and Carussi of the University of Rome, and Riccobono of the University of Palermo.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Theodosian Code (de resp. prud. t. 4). This constitution was discovered by Clossius in the nineteenth century.

<sup>50</sup> L. 2. C. Quae et longa consuetudo (8, 53).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 544.

<sup>52</sup> Schlegel, The Philosophy of History, Lecture 9 (1883 ed., pp. 265 f.).

This beneficent evolution of Roman law was wonderfully favored by a custom that developed notably under Constantine. In obedience to St. Paul's counsel, the Christians had always, so far as possible, avoided having their differences adjudicated in the pagan courts. The bishops were already accustomed to sit in the tribunal of penance and assign canonical penalties. Hence it was natural for the faithful to come to them for an arbitral and extra-official judgment in all civil cases arising between them. Constantine gladly allowed this jurisdiction to grow stronger and to develop beside that of the civil magistrate with his jurisconsults. 58 If we are to credit a Constitution inserted in the Theodosian Code, Constantine not merely left the parties free to take their cases to the ecclesiastical tribunal, as Sozomen says, 54 but he imposed the jurisdiction of the bishop upon the recalcitrant party if the other party appealed to it. The genuineness of this Constitution, however, has been called in question, and such a decision is scarcely likely.

## Constantinople

This sort of judiciary organization was able to develop especially in Constantinople. The new capital was an entirely Christian city. It even seems that the chief motive of its foundation in 329 was Constantine's desire to separate his administration the more freely from the old pagan cult, which was so deeply rooted in the institutions and customs of Rome. Constantinople, admirably served by a large roadstead and an excellent harbor and equally accessible from Europe and

<sup>53</sup> The ancient practice of Roman procedure, of leaving the decision in questions of fact to juries (judices dati pedanei), may have helped to make the introduction of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in civil cases more natural. In Roman custom, the intervention of a citizen not a judge to settle a dispute was not an unheard-of event. Cf. Meysenbug, De Christianae religionis vi et effectu in jus civile.

<sup>54</sup> Sozomen, I, 9.

Asia, was a strategic point for the defense of the district. But this advantage may have been only a secondary consideration.

However this may be, the political and religious consequences of the founding of Constantinople were incalculable. The transfer of the capital to the East had the effect of better detaching the imperial administration from paganism and of letting the pope more freely and evidently occupy the first place in the city of Rome. But "it had another consequence. The city of the emperor's residence would powerfully attract the attention of the whole Empire. The bishop of that place, living near the sovereign and having frequent and close relations with him, would thereby enjoy a privileged position. The Christians of the whole Empire, especially those in the regions near the capital, would regard this bishop as an intermediary with the ruler. If the bishop were to encourage this view, would he not seek to extend his power over a large portion of the Church? In short, by creating a capital other than Rome, was not Constantine, even unwittingly, aiding the formation of a second religious center?" 55 The future would justify these fears.

While the Church was infusing her spirit into the laws and customs, she was extending her frontiers. In Constantine's reign Ethiopia, Iberia (Georgia), Armenia, and Persia, as also the country of the Sarmatians and that of the Goths, received missioners of the Gospel.

## Evangelization of Abyssinia

We are told by a learned Orientalist that "the traditions attributing the introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia or Abyssinia by the eunuch of Queen Candace or by the Apostles St. Bartholomew and St. Matthew, have long since been recog-

<sup>55</sup> Bousquet, L'Unité de l'Église et le schisme grec, p. 44.

nized as false." 56 The evangelization of that country took place in Constantine's reign and under the following circumstances. "Meropius, a philosopher of Tyre, returning from a journey to the Indies, in company with two relatives, the young brothers Frumentius and Edesius, landed on the coast of Northern Abyssinia. The barbarians of the district massacred the crew, sparing only Frumentius and Edesius. The two brothers were brought to the king, who appointed the former his treasurer and the other his cupbearer. At the king's death, the queen requested them not to leave the country until her son, the heir to the throne, should reach the age of maturity. They agreed to remain, and Frumentius, through the influence of his position, obtained assurance of the free exercise of the Christian religion for the Greek merchants who visited the country. He even urged them to erect chapels. According to Socrates, he then won some of the natives to Christianity. When the prince grew up, Frumentius, now free to depart, returned to Alexandria and informed Athanasius of the progress which the Christian faith was making in Abyssinia. He also asked that a bishop be sent there. Athanasius considered no one better fitted than Frumentius himself. He therefore consecrated him bishop. Frumentius, upon his return to Abyssinia, according to Rufinus, converted 'a countless number of the barbarians.' 57 A valuable document which St. Athanasius has preserved for us,<sup>58</sup> confirms Rufinus' ac-

<sup>56</sup> Guidi, art. "Abyssinie," in the Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques, I, 210. The same conclusions are set forth by Father Coulbeaux, C. M., a former provicar apostolic in Abyssinia, in his article "Ethiopie" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 922 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Rufinus, Ecclesiastical History, bk. I, chap. 9. This account which Rufinus refers to Edesius himself, is the source used by later historians, such as Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret (P. G., LXVII, 125, 996; LXXXII, 969). "It was probably at the beginning of his episcopate that St. Athanasius ordained Frumentius." Le Bachelet, art. "Athanase" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 2145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> This is a letter written by Emperor Constantius in 355 to the kings of Aksum, Aizanas, and Sozanas, regarding Bishop Frumentius, ordained by St. Athanasius.

count." <sup>50</sup> Despite the efforts of Constantius and the preaching of an Arian missioner, Theophilus of Dibus, the young Christian community was entirely preserved from Arianism. "In the Tigre district, the horror of that heresy has remained proverbial up to this day. The word 'Arianism' or the execrated name of Arius still serves as an imprecation in the presence of some especially revolting proposal." <sup>60</sup>

## Georgia

The introduction of Christianity into Iberia (Georgia) between Armenia and the Caucasus, is no less dramatic. According to an ancient tradition, reported by Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, 61 it was in Constantine's reign that Iberia received the announcement of the Gospel from a woman captive whose name has not come down to us. The Iberians had taken her prisoner in one of their raids. Her wonderful modesty, the austerity of her life, and her assiduity at prayer aroused the admiration of these barbarians. They questioned her. She replied that she was serving Christ, her God. This name was as strange to them as was all the rest. Unable to rise to a loftier conception of religion, the barbarians wondered merely whether this worship of Christ might not be useful to them in some way. Now, it was a custom in that country for a mother with a sick child to carry it from house to house, to see if anyone knew a remedy for the sickness. A woman thus brought her dying child to the captive. The hum-

The letter is to be found in the Apologia ad Constantium (P. G., XXV, 636; and Oxford Library of Fathers, XIII, 182).

<sup>59</sup> Guidi, loc. cit.

<sup>60</sup> Coulbeaux, loc. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Rufinus, I, 10; Socrates, I, 20; Sozomen, II, 24; Theodoret, I, 23. Cf. Moses of Chorene, *Histoire d'Armenie*. All these narratives are dependent upon Rufinus, who claims to have his account from Bacurius, an early king of Iberia who entered the service of the Romans and from them received the title of master of the militia, in the time of Theodosius. (Rufinus, I, 10.)

ble Christian woman replied: "I am ignorant of human medicine; but Christ whom I adore can, if He wills to do so, cure the sick and raise up the dead." She then placed the child upon the haircloth that was her bed, prayed to God for him, and gave him back cured to his mother. The report of this miracle straightway spread abroad. The queen of the country, who was grievously ill, was herself carried into the lowly hut of the stranger; she at once recovered her health. Shortly after, the king, while hunting, became lost in a dense fog and found his way again only after invoking Christ. Following these heavenly favors, the king and queen both embraced the Christian faith and sent an embassy to Constantine, asking for Christian teachers. Iberia was evangelized by missioners, and the faith spread from there into the neighboring countries, notably into Albania.

Toward the end of Constantine's reign the Christian communities of Iberia and Albania joined the Church of Armenia. This union was the work of Bishop Verthanes whose brother Aristakes took part in the Council of Nicaea as head of the Armenian Church.<sup>62</sup>

### Armenia

"The beginning of Christianity in Armenia is very obscure. According to statements of the national historians, various Apostles went there to preach the Gospel; some of them, as St. Bartholomew and St. Thaddeus, died there. These traditions, however legendary, have historical significance. They prove that the Christian faith passed from Syria into Armenia at an early date. But it is from St. Gregory the Illuminator (Lusarovich) that we must date, if not the birth, at least the

<sup>62</sup> Cuntz, Patrum nicaenorum nomina. Cf. Petit, archbishop of Athens, art. "Armenie" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1894.

<sup>63</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 171.

full flowering of Christianity in Armenia during the second half of the third century." 64

Gregory was sprung from the royal race of the Arsacides and, in his infancy, was saved when the rest of his family was massacred. He took refuge within the confines of the Roman Empire during the occupation of his country by the Persians and was there instructed in the Christian faith. Upon returning to Armenia about 261, he baptized part of the nation, including the king himself. The high office of catholicos, 65 or archbishop of the country, which was conferred on him, was perpetuated in his family. The catholicos Aristakes, who was present at the Council of Nicaea, and the catholicos Verthanes, who later effected the union of the Churches of Iberia and Albania with the Church of Armenia, were his sons. This was the apogee of the Armenian Church in ancient times. We need not accept the glowing accounts left us by the national historians of that early Christianity. 66 But we should recognize that it was very flourishing in the time of Constantine. About 337, however, an end came to the union between the head of the Church and the head of the State. Iousik, the son and successor of Verthanes, paid with his life for his opposition to King Tiran. Later the Armenian Church had to defend itself against the oppression of Persian idolatry. This was the beginning of the terrible trials in the midst of which Armenia, the bulwark of Christianity, merited the name given it by one historian, the "Poland of the East." 67

<sup>64</sup> Petit, ibid., I, 1892 f.

<sup>65</sup> The title "catholicos" at first was given simply to the chief bishop of a district, metropolitan, archbishop, or exarch; only later on, in the time of the separation, was the meaning of independent patriarch attached to it. It is said that, until Narses the Great, Caesarea continued to exercise her supremacy over the Armenian Church. The religious chiefs of Iberia and Albania bore the title of catholicos; but the Armenians never had any idea of considering them as completely autonomous. (Cf. Petit, loc. cit.)

<sup>66</sup> Gelzer, Zur armenischen Gotterlehre.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Cf. Vortabied, Soulèvement national de l'Armenie chrétienne du V° siècle contre la loi de Zoroastre.

### Persia

Sozomen credits the inhabitants of Armenia as also those of Edessa with the foundation of the Christian communities in Persia. We may, however, believe that the entrance of Christianity into Persia dates much earlier. The Acts of the Apostles mentions, among eyewitnesses of the Pentecost miracle, "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia." <sup>69</sup> "This passage shows, at the very least, that about the year 80 the Churches of the Greco-Roman world knew there were Christians in the distant countries of the East. . . . But we may rightly suppose that, before the coming of the Sassanian dynasty, the Persian Empire did not contain any organized Christian communities." <sup>70</sup> Not until about the year 250 were established Churches to be found on the banks of the Tigris.

The people of the Roman provinces who were deported by Sapor I collaborated in the evangelization of Persia.<sup>71</sup> The ruler of that great empire was fond of calling himself the Caesar of Asia,<sup>72</sup> and aspired to nothing less than driving the Romans out of the whole East. That Empire was the center of a powerfully organized religion. The Magi were its ministers; dualism was its principal dogma. Its moral teaching was clear and practical, adroitly mingling earthly, utilitarian considerations with the thought of a future reward.<sup>73</sup> For all these reasons the Persian religion threatened Christianity with a formidable rivalry.

<sup>68</sup> Sozomen, II, 8.

<sup>69</sup> Acts 2:9.

<sup>70</sup> Labourt, Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse, pp. 16 f.

<sup>71</sup> Labourt, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> De Sacy, *Mémoires sur diverses antiquités de la Perse*. "The Persian and Roman monarchies," said an ambassador of Narses, "are the two eyes of the universe; the world would be imperfect and mutilated if one of these should be removed."

<sup>73</sup> Carnoy, in Christus, p. 213.

The Persian kings, although firmly attached to the national religion, did not at first seem impelled to persecute the followers of other religions. But for Eastern Christians, so ready to let their faith be corrupted by the most curious fancies, the contagion of the Persian doctrines might be more dangerous than an open persecution. Constantine, who always considered himself charged by God with the maintenance of the purity of the Christian faith, as well as with the duty of vigilance over the security of the Empire, could not close his eyes to this danger. Eusebius has recorded a letter which Constantine wrote to King Sapor. In this letter, after felicitating and thanking the ruler of the Persians for the liberty granted to the Christians, he asks him to let the worship of Christ be spread more and more. Referring to the Christians, he says to King Sapor:

"Cherish them with your wonted humanity and kindness; for by this proof of faith you will secure an immeasurable benefit both to yourself and us. . . . I cannot, my brother, believe that I err in acknowledging this one God, the author and parent of all things; whom many of my predecessors in power, led astray by the madness of error, have ventured to deny, but who were all visited with a retribution so terrible and so destructive, that all succeeding generations have held up their calamities as the most effectual warning to any who desire to follow in their steps." <sup>76</sup>

### The Goths

This office of protector of Christians, even beyond the frontier of his Empire, which Constantine exercised with such hardihood toward the King of the Persians, he exercised also in the case of the Goths and the Sarmatians.

Like the Iberians, and in almost the very same manner,

<sup>74</sup> Labourt, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>75</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, IV, 11, 13. Cf. Sozomen, II, 15; Theodoret, I,

"the Goths themselves were reached by the spreading of the gospel as soon as they began to live in the neighborhood of the Black Sea. We might almost say that the beginning of their Christianity dated from the terrible invasions by which they harassed the Empire toward the middle of the third century. From their expeditions into Asia Minor they brought back with them, amongst other captives, several Christians who taught them with success the doctrine of Christ. Clergy were to be found amongst the captives; and these organized the first groups of converts. The Churches of Bosphorus and Cherson, as well as those on the Lower Danube, could not fail to serve as bases for propaganda. At the Council of Nicaea there was a bishop of 'Gothia,' called Theophilus." <sup>77</sup>

Constantine profited by his victory over the Goths and by the treaty of alliance which he concluded with them to spread Christianity in their midst. To the Sarmatians, driven from their country by the Slavonians, Constantine offered lands in his province and distributed them in Italy, Scythia, and Macedonia to the number of 300,000.

### Constantine and the Barbarians

The stern and uncompromising attitude of ancient times toward the barbarians had disappeared. Pagan writers, like Zosimus, found fault with Constantine for this new attitude, which they attributed to a disposition of cowardice. This same reproach they extended to all Christians in general and blamed them for the final ruin of the Empire. "But time proved that the men of Germany could receive the influence of the Roman laws. If Rome, even after its fall, was able to impose its customs upon the descendants of the Franks and of the Heruli,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Philostorgius (II, 5) and Sozomen (II, 6) agree on this point. It may be that one of these captives was the Cappadocian Eutyches referred to in a letter of St. Basil (Letter 165).

<sup>77</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 450.

<sup>78</sup> Socrates, I, 18.

why could not the Empire, still firm, in the fulness of its prestige and power, succeed with them? The evil came from a more distant source than Constantine's peaceful policy toward the barbarous races; its source was at a depth where it is scarcely given to human laws to reach. It was from its internal wounds and from the decomposition of all its vital powers that the Empire would perish." <sup>79</sup> It was precisely Constantine's policy—the wide spread of Christianity—that might have enabled the enfeebled Roman nation to recover its strength in the inspirations of a new faith before it was too late. But, with Constantine dead, unfortunately his successors would expect, from the dissolvent doctrines of a vanishing heresy and from a fallen paganism, that regenerative force which could be found only in Roman Catholicism.

#### Christian Literature

The Christian spirit, although trammelled by politics, could express itself in words. "The word of God is not bound," said St. Paul. 80 "The fourth century was the golden age of Christian literature. It was then it produced those sublime and brilliant geniuses whose only rivals are to be found among the sacred orators of the seventeenth century. But these latter were sustained by all the geniuses that encompassed them; in their language they reflected that brilliant magnificence which they considered blameworthy at the king's court. In the fourth century, the loftiness of Christian eloquence seems to grow and thrive in proportion to the decay of all the rest. It was in the midst of the debasement of minds and of courage that an Athanasius and a Chrysostom uttered the purest morality and loftiest eloquence. Their genius alone stands firm amidst

<sup>79</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IV siècle, II, 227 f.

<sup>80</sup> See II Tim. 2: 9.

the Empire's decadence. They appear to be founders, in the midst of ruins." 81

We have already become acquainted with Athanasius as a theologian and controversialist. We regret that his contemporaries did not preserve a few of those speeches which he delivered at Nicaea, some of those heartfelt discourses in which he defended his Catholic flock against the pitfalls of heresy, or when, driven from his see, he bade farewell to his beloved Church. "Therein we would seek to find by what means the primate of Egypt influenced those mixed races, that multiform population which filled Alexandria." <sup>82</sup> In the course of this history we shall have occasion to meet the vibrant and clear eloquence of the Alexandrian patriarch.

About St. Antony, the Father of the desert, the world knows hardly anything more than his austere life and his struggles with the demons. St. Athanasius has preserved some of his discourses. They possess a sober and pleasing eloquence and help us to understand the influence which that hermit had upon those who visited him.<sup>83</sup> To his devout visitors he said:

"You, as children, carry that which you know to your father; and I as the elder share my knowledge and what experience has taught me with you. The whole life of man is very short, measured by the ages to come, wherefore all our time is nothing compared with eternal life. Though we fought on earth, we shall not receive our inheritance on earth, but we have the promises in heaven. As if a man should despise a copper drachma to gain a hundred drachmas of gold; so if a man were lord of all the earth and were to renounce it, that which he gives up is little, and he receives a hundredfold. Let the desire of possession take hold of no one, for what gain is it to acquire these things which we cannot take with us? Why not rather

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Villemain, Tableau de l'éloquence chrétienne au IVe siècle (1856 ed.), pp. 79 f.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>83</sup> St. Athanasius, Life of Antony, nos. 15-17 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., IV, 200 f.).

get those things which we can take away with us—to wit, prudence, justice, temperance, courage, understanding, love, kindness to the poor, faith in Christ?"

#### Christian Poets

Athanasius spoke Greek, Antony spoke Coptic. But it was in Latin that a whole galaxy of poets expressed themselves. In Rome, Italy, Gaul, and Spain they hail the dawn of a new era. The date of the Edict of Milan marks the birth of Christian poetry in the West. Cyprian of Gaul, perhaps the first of all, in still untried verse, sang the divine epos of the Old Testament. An anonymous writer, perhaps a compatriot of Cyprian, shortly afterwards composed two Biblical poems, written in a freer style, purer diction, and more interesting manner: the first on the destruction of Sodom, the other on the saving of Nineveh. A more literary Roman lady, Proba, goes farther and relates not only the history of Israel, but the life of the Savior from His birth to His ascension, in the language of Virgil, taking from the great poet now short expressions, now whole verses.

The most original of these poets was a Spanish priest, Juvencus. In 330 appeared his *Historia evangelica*, a harmony of the four Gospels in which he strives to follow the sacred writers closely without losing the ease and spontaneity of his own language. The poem bears witness to a remarkable culture. Says the poet: "I have wished to adorn the majesty of the divine law with the ornamentations of earthly poetry. It is Christ who has given me this leisure by granting peace to our age." <sup>88</sup> In the prologue, the poet gives free rein to his

<sup>84</sup> Pitra, Spicilegium, I, 171-258.

<sup>85</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 401.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> These poems are usually to be found in the apocryphal works of Tertullian and St. Cyprian. (S. Cypriani opera, Hartel ed., Part III, pp. 289-301.)

<sup>87</sup> Proba, Centones Virgiliani, P. L., XIX, 803-818.

<sup>88</sup> Juvencus, Evangelica historia, bk. 4, verses 805 ff., P. L., XIX, 57.

imagination. It is worthy of being quoted, and reads as follows:

"Nothing immortal exists in the world, Neither earth nor the kingdoms of men; Rome, even Rome, all encrusted with gold, Will itself some day come to an end.

Deeds of the Christ, deathless deeds, do I sing, And proclaim to the world the pure gift, Free from the slightest imposture it is, Which our God has made unto all men.

Even if vast conflagration should come
And the world should be threatened with doom,
Still would I be full of hope high and strong,
And would be without fear for my songs.

Christ the bright Sun of the Father supreme,
All in glory above flaming clouds,
Christ my great Judge, would then come, as I hope,
And would rescue me safe from the flames.

Spirit of God breathe life into my words; Jordan's water give fruit to my song. Naught can I say that is worthy of Christ, Unless Thou grant me aid from on high." 89

Non orbis, non regna hominum, non aurea Roma. Sed mihi carmen erunt Christi vitalia gesta, Divinum in populis falsi sine crimine donum. Nec metus ut mundi rapiant incendia secum Hoc opus; hoc enim forsan me subtrahet igni, Tunc cum flammivoma descendet nube coruscans Judex, Alithroni Genitoris gloria Christus. Ergo age, sanctificus adsit mihi carminis auctor Spiritus, et puro mentem riget amne canentis Dulcis Jordanis, ut Christo digna loquamur. Evangelica historia, prooemium, P. L., XIX, 57.

## Liturgical Feasts

There was another kind of poetry, the series of liturgical feasts that henceforth are observed in magnificent churches which rose up on all sides. Eusebius depicts the enthusiasm that filled men's minds and hearts when so many religious buildings were consecrated. He says:

"There was an incessant joy, and there sprung up for all a certain celestial gladness, seeing every place, which but a short time before had been desolated by the impieties of the tyrants, reviving again, and recovering as from a long and deadly distemper, temples again rising from the soil to a lofty height, and receiving a splendor far exceeding those that had been formerly destroyed. . . . After this the convention of bishops, the concourse of foreigners from abroad, the benevolence of people to people, the unity of the members of Christ concurring in one harmonious body." 90

"The idea of associating a particular solemnity with the taking possession of one of these sacred buildings was too natural to be overlooked, and we find, consequently, an expression of it at an early date. Immediately after the persecution of Diocletian we have notices of the dedication of churches, performed with a certain degree of pomp. Eusebius describes that of Tyre, which was celebrated in the year 314. A special rite did not yet exist. The neighboring bishops were called together, and an immense concourse of people assembled, giving solemnity to the first celebration of the holy mysteries. Addresses bearing on the subject were delivered. . . . Formularies for the dedication of churches are not found in either the Leonian Sacramentary or that of Adrian." 91

The traditional customs do not become established as an official rite until the sixth century.

<sup>90</sup> Eusebius. Ecclesiastical History, tr. by Cruse, X, 2, 3.

<sup>91</sup> Duchesne, Christian Worship, pp. 400, 403.

### The Holy Land

In the erection of the new Christian temples, East and West entered upon a rivalry of zeal. But there was one sacred spot above all other places to which the thought of the faithful turned: this was the land of Palestine, where the Word became flesh and died on a cross. At the beginning of the fourth century the Holy Places seemed doomed to disappear. The rocky mound of Golgotha and the Holy Sepulcher were almost contiguous. The little depression between them had been filled in. Upon the extensive esplanade that encompassed their sides a temple had been built in honor of Venus. At Bethlehem, the grotto of the Nativity experienced a similar profanation. The abominations of the worship of Adonis were there established. Such was the state of affairs in 325. It would seem that the Council of Nicaea took the initiative in the steps undertaken for the restoration of the Holy Places. We are told that, at the closing of the famous Council, Constantine "thought it was his duty to glorify, before the eyes of the world, the blessed Sepulcher of the Savior." The Emperor's instructions were promptly sent to Jerusalem. 92 He ordered very careful excavations to be made on the presumed site of Christ's tomb. The work began in 326.

### St. Helena

Soon it was rumored that the Empress was making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Leaving Rome toward the end of 326, Helena passed through the Eastern provinces of the Empire amid popular ovations. Upon reaching Palestine, she venerated the places made sacred by our Savior's presence. She then purposed consecrating these spots by monuments. Euse-

<sup>92</sup> Rouillon, Sainte Hélène, p. 75.

bius of Caesarea makes particular mention of two basilicas which she had built. He speaks of them as "two noble and beautiful monuments of devotion, worthy of everlasting remembrance." One was at Bethlehem, over the grotto of the Nativity; the other, in honor of the Ascension, was near the top of the Mount of Olives, over the grotto where our Lord instructed His Apostles.

## Finding of the True Cross

An early tradition, not recorded by Eusebius, but referred to by Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, St. Ambrose, and St. John Chrysostom, relates that Helena cleared the supposed site of Calvary and that soon the rock of Calvary, the Holy Sepulcher, was discovered, and in a cistern were found three crosses. Presumably these were the Savior's cross and the crosses of the two thieves. The sudden cure of a grievously sick woman in high station by the mere touch of one of the crosses miraculously identified the cross on which Christ died.<sup>93</sup>

The finding of the Savior's cross at Jerusalem in 327 is a fact attested by so great a number of agreeing evidences that we cannot seriously think of doubting it. Before the fourth century the Christian world had no hope of ever finding the sacred wood which Christ stained with His blood. Says a writer of that period: "O blessed cross, earth will not possess you; a day will come when your glance will embrace the immensity of the heavens." <sup>94</sup> But from the middle of the fourth century, that is, twenty years after St. Helena's journey to Palestine, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, preaching at the very site of the discovery, speaks of the worldwide diffusion of the relics of the true cross. <sup>95</sup> An inscription of 369, found in the

<sup>98</sup> Rufinus, Ecclesiastical History, I, 7.

<sup>94</sup> Sibylline Oracles, VI, 26, 27, 28.

<sup>95</sup> St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures, IV, 10; X, 19; XIII, 4.

neighborhood of Setif in Mauretania, contains an enumeration of relics, including a fragment of the wood of the cross.<sup>96</sup> From that time on the testimonies became increasingly numerous.<sup>97</sup>

The only complication is with regard to the circumstances that accompanied the discovery of the Savior's cross. The first difficulty arises from the variations we meet in the accounts by St. Ambrose and St. Chrysostom, and the later account of Rufinus, which is copied by Socrates and Sozomen. The former narrative says that St. Helena recognized "the cross of salvation" by its very position, between the two other crosses, and especially by the inscription "Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews," which was still on it. Rufinus supposes that no outward mark identified the cross of Christ and that it was designated only by the miracle.

Some have even denied that the true cross was discovered by St. Helena, because Eusebius of Caesarea, a contemporary living close to the events he reports, says nothing about the discovery of the holy cross in his detailed account of the Empress' journey to Palestine. This historian, however, quotes a letter from Constantine to Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, in which there is mention of "the monument of the Savior's most holy Passion, so long buried beneath the ground," and again: "a spot which has been accounted holy from the beginning in God's judgment, but which now appears holier still, since it has brought to light a clear assurance of our Savior's Passion." Balestine is the view of some Catholic historians.

<sup>96</sup> Mélanges de l'École de Rome, X, 441.

 $<sup>^{97}</sup>$  Most of these evidences are cited and critically discussed in Rouillon, Sainte Hélène, pp. 141–148.

<sup>98</sup> St. Ambrose, De obitu Theodosii, chap. 45 P. L., XVI, 1401. St. John Chrysostom, Homilies on St. John, 85; P. G., LIX, 461.

<sup>99</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 30.

<sup>100</sup> Rouillon, op. cit., appendix 1. Cf. L. de Combes, La Vraie Croix perdue et retrouvée.

But this view nowise militates against the substance and historical genuineness of the event itself.

"At the news that Jerusalem was arising from its ruins, crowned with the true cross of Christ, a cry of joy broke from all Christian hearts. By a final miracle God had just consecrated the already wonderful triumph of His Church. What a sight, that instrument of divine suffering, issuing suddenly from the earth and becoming a sign of domination and victory! People might have thought they were witnessing the day of the final resurrection and seeing the Son of man, borne on the clouds and about to reward His servants." <sup>101</sup> But the cross is more than a sign of triumph; it is also the memorial of trial and immolation. Any Christian who may have forgotten this would soon be convinced of its truth during the days following Constantine's death.

<sup>101</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., II, 125.

#### CHAPTER IV

## From Constantine's Death to the Council of Sardica (337-343)

POPE St. Sylvester died before Constantine. The *Liber pontificalis* mentions the pope's death in unusual terms that bear witness to a great veneration for the holy pontiff: "catholicus et confessor quievit." <sup>2</sup> In the next century the memory of St. Sylvester was consecrated at Rome by a religious edifice, and his name was associated with that of St. Martin, the great confessor of the West.<sup>3</sup>

### Pope St. Mark

His successor, St. Mark, occupied the see of Rome only eight months. He died on October 7, 336, after having consecrated two new basilicas, one on the Via Ardeatina, where his remains are laid, and the other within the city of Rome. He encouraged and comforted the patriarch Athanasius and the episcopate of Egypt. He watched over the execution of the Nicene decisions. These are the only authentic facts that we know concerning his pontificate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Liber pontificalis, I, 200, note 125.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 201, note 125.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The cemetery of Balbina was discovered by De Rossi in 1867 near the cemetery of Callistus. See De Rossi, Bulletino di archeologia cristiana, 1867, pp. 1 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> This church is still standing. Its mosaics and paintings were referred to by Pope Hadrian I in 794, as documents testifying to the use of images in the time of the Council of Nicaea (Hardouin, IV, 812; Mansi, XIII, 801). Pope Gregory IV restored the church in the ninth century. De Rossi thinks that parts of the mosaic may go back to a date earlier than the restoration.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Jaffé, Regesta pontificum romanorum (ed. 1885-88), I, 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mansi, II, 1165; P. L., VIII, 854.

<sup>8</sup> Liber pontificalis, I, 202-204.

## Pope St. Julius I

Julius I replaced St. Mark in the see of Peter, February 8, 337. For more than fifteen years he would be the stalwart defender of St. Athanasius and the Nicene faith. He was a native of Rome. The *Liber pontificalis* notes that, in accordance with his predecessors' plans to Christianize the Eternal City in its monuments and to provide for the religious needs of the faithful, he built two basilicas and constructed three cemeteries. But this work did not divert him from the general interests of the Church. In the quarrels stirred up by the party of Eusebius, in the conflicts that would divide the emperors, and in the schism that would take shape between East and West, we shall find this holy pontiff firmly guiding the universal Church confided to his care.

## The Empire at Constantine's Death

The gloomy foreboding that darkened the last hours of Constantine's life was soon realized. It is not our task to relate the horrible tragedies that bloodied the imperial palace and the political disturbances accompanying those events: the assassination of the patrician Optatus, Constantine's brother-in-law; then the killing of the Emperor's brother, Julius Constantius; then of the two Caesars, Dalmatius and Hannibalianus; and of five other members of the imperial family; the complaints of the Romans, who were deprived of the great Emperor's remains and were jealous of Constantinople; the break-up of the coherent forces of the Empire; the new and necessary partition between the sons of Constantine, keeping the East

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Idem, I, 205. There were two kinds of churches: some were erected chiefly in honor of a saint; these were built over his tomb or over a fictitious tomb containing one of his relics; the others were chiefly places where the liturgical functions were carried out. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 388. There remain only a few uncertain ruins of the basilica built by St. Julius. *Liber pontificalis*, I, 206.

under the rule of Constantius, and dividing the West between Constantine II and Constans.

At the same time the divisions within the Church became accentuated. None of Constantine the Great's three sons inherited his loftiness of view or greatness of soul. Constantine II and Constans did require adherence to the Nicene faith. This they did sincerely, but without courage. Constantius was the most powerful of the three, but the most narrowly despotic, the most jealous, and fundamentally the feeblest, the most subject to subaltern influences. By his own inclination, by the influence of his wife who was ruled by the Arian priest Eutocius, and by that of Eusebius of Nicomedia, who dominated the court, he became the center of the faction which sought to ruin the work of the great Council.

It is true that the semi-Arian party was divided: the right wing, which always recognized the Bishop of Nicomedia as its leader, declared that it fully accepted the Nicene symbol, except the word homoousios (consubstantial), which it replaced by the term homoiousios (similar); the left wing, composed of bolder and more logical men, rejected both the Catholics' homoousios and the Eusebians' homoiousios; its members thereby merited the name of Anomians, from the word anomoios (not even similar). Between the two factions, however, a union is formed through their common hatred of the Catholics. When Constantius becomes master of the Empire, the party of antinicene opposition will triumph and, by thirty years of scandalous broils in the Church, will prepare the way for the revival of paganism under Julian the Apostate.

We must acknowledge that this last result was neither intended nor foreseen by Constantine's sons. On the contrary, we shall see them carry out and extend the measures undertaken by their father against the pagan religion. Furthermore, less than a month after Constantine's death, they permitted all the exiled bishops, including Athanasius, to resume their

former offices in their respective dioceses.<sup>10</sup> But Constantius' growing preponderance in the government of the Empire, his mania for interfering in ecclesiastical matters, and the increasing influence of the Eusebian party at court, altered the direction of these measures.

#### The Antinicene Movement

The plan of the Eusebians had three objectives: I. to quibble over words and profit by the elasticity which several theological terms still had, so as to evade the Nicene faith while appearing to accept it; 2. to seize quickly as many episcopal sees as possible, even if they had to do so by force; 3. to win the West and, if possible, the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff, to their cause.

At first glance, nothing could be stranger than this energetic and persevering reaction of an entire section of the Eastern episcopate against the conciliar decisions which had been signed by more than three hundred Fathers, most of them Easterners. "Must we, in agreement with certain Protestants, say that the victory had been too rapid, that it was a surprise rather than a solid conquest? No." <sup>11</sup> Must we hold that this opposition to the Council was due solely to the perfidy or hypocrisy of the Eusebians? Again, no. The duplicity of the principal leader of the party and of several of his accomplices is undeniable. But many of those who were rebellious to the orthodox interpretation were prompted by other considerations. "If we take the Nicene condemnation on the Scriptural and traditional ground, where the Fathers took their stand, the victory of orthodoxy was a solid one. In its symbols the oppo-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> This is the conclusion to be drawn from several recent studies, cited by Le Bachelet in Vacant's *Dictionnaire de théologie*, I, 1807. A letter of Constantine II supposes that Athanasius' return was decided upon by the late emperor. This return took place November 23, 337. (Duchesne, II, 156.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Le Bachelet, loc. cit.

sition never resumed the position of primitive Arianism: the affirmation that the Word is a creature derived from nothingness and having an altogether different essence from that of the Father.

"But the Arian controversy raised complex questions, philosophical and theological, which were not settled, at least not explicitly, by the Nicene definition." 12 For example, in the language of the early Greek Fathers the word ousia, which we now translate by "substance," and the word hypostasis, which we render by the word "person," were often confused. Mistakenly but with some plausibility, the learned Father Petau 18 has maintained that St. Epiphanius, St. Athanasius, and even the Council of Nicaea fell into the same confusion.<sup>14</sup> Eusebius and his friends insisted upon using, in preference to ousia, the word hypostasis which, because it was not clearly defined or because the idea of threefold was habitually attached to it, lent itself better to equivocation. "Three hypostases," they said; "therefore three beings. But there is only one single being who is God; hence neither the Son nor the Holy Ghost has a right to adoration." This was a deduction framed to mislead the uncritical. 15 The Arian ruse could not deceive the Westerners, for whom such a confusion of words was impossible. They expressed the principle of unity by the word substantia and kept, for the principle of threefoldness, the word persona.16 But the snare succeeded with the Greeks.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> On this point Petau is refuted by Garnier, Preface to the Letters of St. Basil, P. G., XXXII, 16, and Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, I, 146 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The Council anathematizes those who hold that "the Word proceeds from another hypostasis or ousia." Petau considers the conjunction "or" in this passage as having a synonomous force, whereas St. Basil regards it as signifying an alternative. Letter 125, no. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Régnon, op. cit., I, 152.

<sup>16</sup> This word is open to still another equivocation. Since the word *persona* has the primitive meaning of "mask," "face," "aspect," and since the Greeks translated it by  $\pi\rho\delta\sigma\omega\pi\sigma\nu$ , some persons considered the three divine Persons as merely three

As a clever strategist, Eusebius did not place the Trinitarian question on the mere ground of pure dialectics. He knew instinctively that a doctrine has no serious chance of enduring unless it is supported by an organized institution. In 338 the Arians <sup>17</sup> began to form themselves into separate communities. The election of the Arian Pistus to the see of Alexandria, that of Eusebius of Nicomedia to the see of Constantinople, that of the Arian Gregory to replace Pistus, and that of the Arian Acacius to Caesarea, replacing Eusebius of Caesarea, were the chief events of this new campaign in the course of 338, 339, and 340.

## Pistus, Bishop of Alexandria

Pistus, a priest of Mareotis, was one of Arius' first disciples. He was deposed and condemned by St. Alexander at the same time as the heresiarch. In the eyes of the Arians he possessed the halo which he derived from the master's friendship and the halo which he received from a so-called persecution. This appears to be the only prestige he had. But it was enough to single him out as the choice of the Arians of Alexandria for the most illustrious see of Asia, as successor to St. Athanasius. It is impossible for us to be sure whether he was elected before or after Athanasius' return. We know simply that for more than a year Athanasius was in his metropolis face to face with his rival.

The Arians left nothing undone to consolidate their candi-

aspects of the Divinity and thus fell into the Sabellian heresy. As a consequence of long and painful controversies over this subject, the meaning of all these terms became more precise, and thereby the sense of the orthodox doctrine.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Following the practice of most historians, in the pages that follow we will frequently use the term "Arians" when speaking of semi-Arians. But we should bear in mind that, after the Council of Nicaea, pure Arianism no longer had any avowed followers about Eusebius of Nicomedia.

<sup>18</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 157.

<sup>19</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia contra Arianos.

date's election. They wrote to various bishops for the purpose of getting them to agree that they would place themselves in communion with Pistus. To prevent any interference by the Emperor, several influences were set in motion: that of the eunuch Eusebius, palace chamberlain, that of various ladies in high station, and that of the Empress herself.<sup>20</sup> Overtures were made even to Pope Julius I, to whom a priest and two deacons were sent, commissioned to place before his eyes the Acts of the Council of Tyre, deposing Athanasius and consequently leaving the place open for Pistus. These precautionary steps were well calculated. But Athanasius was not easily caught unaware. He wrote immediately to all the bishops of Egypt, explaining the real import of the Synod of Tyre. By the hands of reliable priests, he transmitted this same document to Pope Julius.

## Eusebius, Bishop of Constantinople

Upon receiving the various delegations, the Pontiff was able to learn that another usurpation was accomplished, under still more odious circumstances, at Constantinople, to the advantage of the Bishop of Nicomedia.

This scheming prelate, who had abandoned his canonical residence, for some time past was living at the court, where he was conducting the education of the two children of the imperial family: one was Gallus; the other was Julian the future Apostate. Even such an honor did not gratify his ambition. He aspired to nothing less than the see of the new capital. True, the see was then occupied. At Alexander's death in August 337, there were two opposing candidates for the succession: an Arian named Macedonius, and a Catholic, Paul. The latter was chosen. But the Arians merely waited for a suitable opportunity to recover the lost place. Some pretext

<sup>20</sup> Sozomen, III, 1.

or other was found. A charge against the Bishop was the cause for the meeting of a synod, made up of friends of Eusebius. It deposed Paul and obtained from Constantius an order for his deportation to Mesopotamia.<sup>21</sup> Eusebius was at once put in his place. This was the second time he changed his episcopal see for the capital of the Empire. These events occurred at the close of 338 or the beginning of 339.

# Acacius, Bishop of Caesarea

On May 30, 339, according to some historians,<sup>22</sup> at the latest about the beginning of 340, the other Eusebius died, the illustrious bishop of Caesarea. He had just written two works against Marcellus of Ancyra, in which the desire to confound a friend of Athanasius was more evident than a care to defend orthodox doctrine.<sup>23</sup> His friends were in haste to have one of his disciples, Acacius the One-eyed, made his successor. This man was a priest of remarkable talent and learning. He had written seventeen volumes on the Book of Ecclesiastes, some Various Questions, and other essays, of which only a few fragments remain. But he had a scheming and versatile mind. Later on he would play an important part in Arianism and would become the leader of a sect taking its name from him, the Acacian party.

### Gregory, Bishop of Alexandria

Affairs in Alexandria grew worse. The position of Pistus, who was too much compromised by his complicity with Arius and handicapped by grave defects of character, was no longer tenable. Eusebius suggested to the Emperor the idea of re-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, no. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Lightfoot, art. "Eusebius of Caesarea" in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, II, 318.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Moehler, Athanase le Grand, French tr., II, 210 f.

moving him from office. With no concern for the regulations of canon law, which provided that a bishop be elected by his people and his clergy and that he be installed by the bishops of his metropolitan jurisdiction, Constantius offered the bishopric to a certain Eusebius, a native of Edessa. Upon the latter's refusal, he offered it to a certain Gregory, a native of Cappadocia, who accepted. Gregory was immediately consecrated at Constantinople and sent to Egypt under the protection of Philagrius, the prefect of the province. About the middle of March 339, the latter presented him to the people of Alexandria as the new bishop. But such cynical disregard of legal procedure stirred the animosity of the Christian population of Alexandria, where Athanasius continued to have devoted followers. The crowds went to the churches to defend them against the intruder. Escorted by a police force, he was obliged to take the churches by assault, one after another. Blood flowed. At some of the churches, some people were left wounded or dead.24 Athanasius yielded to force.

This time, however, it was not merely to his brother-bishops of Egypt, but to the bishops of the whole world that he addressed his indignant protests. With holy daring he disclosed the person responsible for all these misdeeds, Eusebius of Nicomedia. He wrote:

"This then is the plot of the Eusebians, which they have long been devising and bringing to bear; and now have succeeded in accomplishing through the false charges which they have made against me before the Emperor. Notwithstanding, they are not content to be quiet, but even now seek to kill me; and they make themselves so formidable to my friends, that they are all driven into banishment, and expect death at their hands. But you must not for this stand in awe of their iniquity, but on the contrary avenge; and show your indignation at this their unprecedented conduct against me." <sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> St. Athanasius, Festal Letters, Index.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> St. Athanasius, Encyclical Letter (Oxford Library of Fathers, XIII, 10).

After launching this manifesto, Athanasius, with great difficulty, evaded the surveillance placed over him, left Egypt, and set out for Rome, where he arrived soon after Easter.

To put an end to the petitions that were coming to him from the Eusebians, Pope Julius had sent two Roman legates to the East—Elpidius and Philoxenus. They were instructed to invite the petitioning bishops to come to Rome and there submit their claims before a council. The reply of the Eastern bishops, prompted if not actually drawn up by Eusebius, was haughty. They declined the invitation, protesting against the idea of having Eastern councils reviewed in the West and almost calling upon the Pope to choose between people like Athanasius or Marcellus of Ancyra and the communion of the Churches of the East. The Pope, deeply offended, went ahead and assembled the council. It was held at Rome in the summer or autumn of 340.

"Every bishop throughout the East who had been deposed and hounded out of his see, hastened to Rome at the first mention of the council. From Thrace, from Asia Minor, from Syria, from Phenicia, and from Palestine, the exiled bishops and priests alike poured into Rome. Marcellus of Ancyra made a long stay there. He also had been denounced to the Pope, who had invited his accusers, as he had invited those of Athanasius, to appear before him. In their absence, Marcellus explained his belief, and his language seemed satisfactory; Vitus and Vincent, the Roman delegates to the Nicene Council, testified to the zeal he had then displayed against the Arians. In short, he was restored to communion and to his episcopal dignity.

"These decisions were notified to the Eastern episcopate by a letter which Pope Julius addressed to those who had signed the one brought by the legates from Antioch.<sup>26</sup> The Pope's letter is one of the most remarkable documents in the whole affair. Although deeply wounded by the bitterness of the Orientals, and the insolent tone

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> This letter is quoted by St. Athanasius in his Apologia contra Arianos, 20-25 (P. G., XXV, 281 f.).

they had adopted towards him, he maintained an attitude in keeping with his position, and remained calm, pacific, and impartial. If he had summoned the Easterners, it was at the request of their own envoys; he would have done it, in any case, on his own motion, for it was natural to take cognizance of the complaints of bishops who said they had been unjustly deposed.

"A revision of the decisions of councils was not an unheard-of thing. When the Eastern Churches received Arius and his followers, did they not act in this way towards the Council of Nicaea? They contested his right, by alleging that the authority of bishops is not measured by the importance of their cities. A strange argument in the mouth of persons who are forever transferring themselves from one capital to another. . . . Yet his desire throughout has been to make a close and thorough examination of the whole question. He has decided the case upon the information at his command, and in particular upon the documents of the Council of Tyre, furnished by the Easterners themselves.

"If they think that they can prove that he is mistaken, let them appear; the accused are always ready with an answer. If they had been willing to conform to ancient usage and, since the matter concerned bishops of importance—the see of Alexandria—to address themselves at the outset to the Roman Church, with a request that she would decide what was right, things would not have come to this pass. They must get out of these scandalous quarrels, in which the bitter grudges of self-love give themselves rein at the expense of charity and of brotherly union." <sup>27</sup>

In short, the Eusebians' plan failed on one essential point of its program. By their theological subtleties they had been able to upset many minds, and by their trickery to lay hands on the government of many important Churches in the East. But when they attempted to gain the West by winning the Pope to their cause or at least by obtaining his sanction to pass final judgment upon their cause by themselves, the Pope, instead of yielding to their wishes, took a clear stand as their

<sup>27</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 163.

judge and peremptorily required that they come to the See of Peter. The heresy had dashed itself upon the firm rock on which God built His Church.

At the time of these negotiations, in which the Eastern episcopate so haughtily claimed its autonomy in the face of Rome, an important political event more conspicuously marked the break that was taking place between the two parts of the Empire. In the midst of a fratricidal war that arose between Constantine II and Constans, the former perished in battle and left to his brother the inheritance of the whole West. Henceforth Rome and Constantinople faced each other as rivals, each having its own emperor.

### Council of Antioch (341)

The Eusebians took courage. In the course of the year 341, the city of Antioch witnessed the consecration of a great church, called the Golden Church, which was begun by Constantine and finished by Constantius. Ninety-seven bishops were present at the ceremony. Under such circumstances it was customary for them to assemble in council to treat of the current interests of the Church. The majority of these bishops were not heterodox, but all were Easterners, including a minority of very clever and active semi-Arians. In this number were Eusebius of Nicomedia, now bishop of Constantinople, and Acacius, bishop of Caesarea. This was the Council of Antioch, commonly called the Synod in Encoeniis (*i. e.*, the Synod of Dedication). The complex character of this assembly has exercised the sagacity of critics.<sup>28</sup>

It published twenty-five disciplinary canons, which, in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Some historians think we have here two distinct councils: one, orthodox, which enacted the twenty-five disciplinary canons; the other, Arian, which deposed Athanasius. This opinion is held by the learned Jesuit, Schelstraten; it is opposed by Tillemont. On the discussion of this question, see Hefele, II, 60 ff.

general, deserve admiration. Two of them, however, betray the influence of the Eusebians and their hostility to Athanasius. The fourth canon excluded from any hope of restoration a bishop who had dared continue his functions in spite of his deposition by a synod. The twelfth provided the same penalty for a bishop who, being condemned by a synod, would carry his case to the emperor. The Eusebians in the Council at once gave these canons a retroactive interpretation and declared the deposition of Athanasius. They hoped thus to cut short any attempt by Pope Julius to restore the Patriarch of Alexandria to his office.

Their influence appeared likewise in the wording of the three formulas or professions of faith, soon followed by a fourth, which was voted by a new gathering of Eastern bishops. These formulas have this in common, that, although abandoning pure Arianism, they omit the word homoousios (consubstantial). In them was also noticed a tendency to make the doctrines of Marcellus of Ancyra, which were suspected of Sabellianism, dependent upon the Nicene doctrines. Lastly, they began the era of dogmatic Creeds and, according to Socrates' expression, they formed the entrance of that labyrinth of Creeds in the turnings of which the belief of the Eastern Church would afterwards go astray.<sup>29</sup>

Soon, about the end of 341 or the beginning of 342, Eusebius of Nicomedia (now become Eusebius of Constantinople) died. Intelligent and capable, but ambitious and vindictive, he successfully insinuated and sustained doctrinal errors without ever being formally excommunicated. He remained the favorite of the Emperor and the friend of the heretics without breaking with the Roman pontiff. He died at the height of human honors, once more seeing his foe Athanasius in exile, but leaving to posterity only

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> The four Creeds of Antioch are recorded by St. Athanasius, *De Synodis*, nos. 22-25. Hefele (II, 76-81) also quotes them and comments on them.

"the memory of an intriguing prelate, in whom one can find no single sympathetic feature, a memory that remains weighted with a heavy responsibility." <sup>80</sup>

### Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople

Freed from the tyranny of Eusebius, the Catholic population of Constantinople was eager to recall their lawful bishop, Paul, from his unjust exile. He was reinstalled in his see. But the Arian faction, under the leadership of Theodore of Heraclea and Theognis of Nicaea, set up in opposition to him that Macedonius who had formerly been his rival and would one day be added to the list of the heresiarchs. Disturbances broke out. Blood was shed. A military officer, Hermogenes by name, sent by the Emperor to establish order, was slain. Constantius, who was absent from his capital at the time, returned in all haste, determined to ravage it all with fire and blood. The weeping people and suppliant magistrates went forth to meet him. He yielded to their entreaties and was satisfied merely to banish Paul. Although not confirming the election of Macedonius, he allowed him to celebrate the holy mysteries in the church where he had been consecrated. A little while later the intruding bishop, escorted by a group of his followers and by hired ruffians who were ready for any undertaking, returned to Constantinople and, after fresh scenes of savagery, took possession of all the churches of the city.

As for Paul, he was exiled to the depths of Mesopotamia, then to the mountains of Cappadocia. At first they tried to make him die of hunger. As he held out too long against this martyrdom, the prefect of the praetorian guard, Philip, fearing lest the Bishop might return to the midst of his people, had him strangled. The Church has placed him in the number of her saints.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Duchesne, op. cit., II, 169.

<sup>81</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, no. 7; Apology on his Flight, 3; St.

#### Photinus

The violent methods of the Arian party had not altered. Eusebius of Nicomedia's spirit of intrigue also survived him in his see. In 342, when the lamentable events just described were taking place, word spread that the Bishop of Sirmium (or Sirmich) in Pannonia, Photinus by name, was uttering strange doctrines about the Trinity and about Christ. Photinus, in his concern to safeguard the idea of God's oneness, would not admit that in God there are three Persons properly so called. He thought to satisfy Catholic tradition by considering therein a Word that, at the first moment of its development, was merely the impersonal Reason of God, but which, by a second extension, became the Son of God. The Son of God penetrates, with His divine influence, the humanity of Jesus and thus raises it above all the prophets, even to the point of making it deserve the name of Christ, adoptive Son of God, and, in a certain sense, even the name of God. It was easy to perceive in this system a return to the errors of Paul of Samosata and Sabellius.32

But Photinus, a native of Ancyra, had been the deacon and disciple of Marcellus. It was evident from the outset what advantages the Eusebians were going to derive from his heresy. Marcellus of Ancyra had been the champion of the consubstantiality of the Word at Nicaea, the friend of Athanasius; his rehabilitation had just been accomplished at the same time as that of Athanasius, by Pope Julius. For the Eusebians, to strike Photinus was a way of reaching all their foes at one stroke.

Yet the impression prevailed that, so long as the West was

Jerome, Chronica, year of Abraham 2358; Socrates, II, 6, 7, 12; Sozomen, III, 3, 4, 7-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Cf. Tixeront, *History of Dogmas*, II, 41-43. Photinus considered that the Holy Ghost was merely a new extension of the Divinity.

not won over, no success would be solid in the East. Pope Julius had shown himself immovable. An attempt was made with the Emperor of the West. A deputation, composed of four bishops (Narcissus of Neronias, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, and Mark of Arethusa) <sup>33</sup> set out for Treves, where Constans resided. They brought with them the fourth Creed of Antioch, in which the most dubious of the Arian expressions were repudiated, but in which the procession of the Son was expressed in a vague manner.

While all these plots were under way, the exiled Athanasius was at Rome. From the beginning of his exile we see him following the life of an ascetic in company with two monks whom he brought from the desert. A general sympathy was felt for him and thereby for the great cause for which he was suffering. Soon he was able to count on the support not only of several eminent Roman families, like that of the virgin Marcella,34 but also on that of the aunt of the Emperor of the East, Eutropium.<sup>35</sup> Did these influences affect the Emperor? The fact is that, in April or May, 342, Athanasius was summoned to Milan by Emperor Constans. The monarch, despairing of putting an end to so many conflicts by the means thus far employed, thought of assembling a universal council, as his father had done. Athanasius approved of the idea and went to Gaul to confer with Hosius.<sup>36</sup> At the same time Constans communicated his plan to Constantius, who was then much occupied with his war against the Persians and dared not show himself unwilling to oblige his brother. In concert with Pope Julius, the place selected for the council was the city of Sardica, now Sofia in Bulgaria. This city, under the rule of

<sup>33</sup> Narcissus and Maris had taken part in the Council of Nicaea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 127, to Principia (*Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 253 ff.; P. L., XXII, 1090).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia ad Constantium, 6 (Oxford Library of Fathers, XIII, 160; P. G., XXV, 604).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Idem, 4.

Emperor Constantius but forming part of the Roman patriarchate,<sup>37</sup> was located at the extreme limit of the two Empires and thus equally distant from the two Churches. It would be the bond of union between the East and the West.

## Council of Sardica (343)

The synodal letter informs us that the Council of Sardica was convoked by the Emperors Constans and Constantius, at the wish of Pope Julius,<sup>38</sup> for three reasons: I. to end the disagreements that were dividing the Church, particularly those relating to Athanasius and Marcellus of Ancyra; 2. to extirpate every error from religious teaching; 3. to make all profess the true faith in Jesus Christ. The Fathers of the Council would indeed go beyond this program. The most famous of their decisions, those regulating the right of appeal by individual Churches to the Roman Church, were outside the three points mentioned.

The Council of Sardica began its sessions in the closing days of 343.<sup>39</sup> The West was much more extensively represented than at the Council of Nicaea. The synodal letter sent to the Alexandrians mentions, among others, delegates from Rome, Gaul, Spain, Italy, Africa, Sardinia, Pannonia, Mysia, Dacia, and Noricum.<sup>40</sup> Thirty-five provinces, according to St. Athanasius, were represented. From this same source we learn that 170 bishops, Eastern or Western, were present. Of this number seventy-six belonged evidently to Eusebius' party. Therefore the orthodox numbered ninety-four.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Hefele, II, 91, note 2. Cf. Wiltsch, The Geography and Statistics of the Church, Vol. I, sec. 44, 80, 88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> St. Athanasius, *Apologia contra Arianos*, chap. 44. A misunderstanding of a text of Socrates has led some to consider that the Council was convoked by Pope Julius himself. See Hefele, II, 90, note 2.

<sup>39</sup> On the determination of this date, see Hefele, II, 86 ff.

<sup>40</sup> P. G., XXV, 308 f.

<sup>41</sup> Hefele, II, 93.

Pope Julius was represented by two priests, Archidanus and Philoxenus. He justified his own absence by such cogent reasons that the Council considered his explanation satisfactory and the schismatics and heretics could not take advantage of his absence to work mischief. 42 In his place Bishop Hosius of Cordova, who had held the same office at Nicaea, presided over the assembly, introduced the canons, and was the first to sign the Acts of the Council. The two Roman priests, papal legates, as at Nicaea were evidently Hosius' assistants, for their names come immediately after the name of the Bishop of Cordova, in the list recorded by St. Athanasius. We note the presence of the following in the Council: among the Eusebians, Acacius of Caesarea, Marcus of Arethusa, Basil of Ancyra, and Macedonius of Constantinople; among the orthodox, the illustrious Maximinus of Treves (who had courageously given hospitality to St. Athanasius during the latter's first exile), Verissimus of Lyons, Januarius of Beneventum, Diodorus of Tenedos, Athanasius, and Marcellus of Ancyra. A third hishop under accusation, Asclepas of Gaza, was also present.

At first the hopes of the Pope were in a fair way to be realized. A majority of the Fathers, at the outset, took an independent stand, which the absence of imperial commissioners appeared to guarantee. This was precisely what alarmed the Eusebians. They were all lodged in the city palace, imperial property, under the protection of Count Musonianus, the same officer who had been present at the deposition of Eustathius of Antioch in 330. Soon, however, two of their number, Asterius of Arabia and Arius (alias Macarius) of Palestine, unable to endure the tyrannical yoke to which they were subjected, joined the orthodox and warned the latter of the plots of the Eusebian party. These defections, the presence of Athanasius, whose eloquent words the Eusebians always dreaded, and the presence of several priests who had been

<sup>42</sup> Hefele, II, 96. Cf. Mansi, III, 40, 66.

formerly tortured by them and who, it was said, were ready to accuse them in open council, greatly vexed them. After an understanding among themselves, they set forth, as a preliminary condition of their participation in the Council, that those bishops be excluded who had been condemned by any councils.

This proposal, directed especially at Athanasius, rested on no juridical foundation; for the decision of the Council of Rome, proclaiming his innocence in 340, was of quite as much worth as that of the Council of Antioch, which condemned him in 339. Further, the letter of convocation to the Council, sent by the Emperors, had ordered that the whole affair of Athanasius be reviewed from its beginning. But the Eusebians cried aloud that their conscience did not permit them to partake of the sacraments with men officially condemned. Hosius has left us an account, pulsating with sincerity and feeling, in which he relates his attempts to overcome the obstinacy of these rebels. He says:

"I challenged the enemies of Athanasius, when they came to the church where I abode, that if they had anything against him they might declare it; desiring them to have confidence, and not to expect otherwise than that a right judgment would be passed in all things. This I did once and again, requesting them, if they were unwilling to appear before the whole Council, yet to appear before me alone; promising them also that, if he should be proved guilty, he should certainly be rejected by us; but, if he should be found to be blameless, and should prove them to be calumniators, that if they should then refuse to hold communion with him, I would persuade him to go with me into the Spains. Athanasius was willing to comply with these conditions and made no objection to my proposal; but they, altogether distrusting their cause, would not consent." 44

<sup>48</sup> Mansi, III, 40.

<sup>44</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, no. 44.

The prospect of being publicly convicted of calumny frightened them. On the pretext of a wish to go and congratulate Emperor Constantius upon his recent victory over the Persians, they quit Sardica during the night with the intention of not coming back.<sup>45</sup>

The orthodox bishops, the only ones now left at the Council, at once set to work. The documents relating to the charges against Athanasius and Marcellus of Ancyra from the beginning, were carefully assembled and examined. On all points, the calumnious character of the charges was evident. Marcellus of Ancyra explained the scandalous statements attributed to him, either by placing them in their context or by showing that he had set forth merely as uncertain hypotheses what were attributed to him as absolute principles. The Council was convinced that, in spite of certain vague expressions, substantially the Bishop of Ancyra had never taught that the Word was born of Mary or that it was not eternal. Asclepas of Gaza was likewise exculpated, as also various priests haled before the Council by the Eusebians on similar charges. All were officially declared restored to their titles and offices, and the principal leaders of the Eusebians, including Acacius of Caesarea, were anathematized and deposed. 46

But these were only questions of fact. The Fathers of Sardica wished, before adjourning, to proclaim canonical regulations, the observance of which would henceforth prevent disturbances like those which had just afflicted the Church.

### The Canons of Sardica

The most important and famous of the canons of Sardica concern the serious disciplinary question of appeals to Rome.

46 Mansi, III, 55, 63, 66.

<sup>45</sup> St. Athanasius, op. cit., no. 16. Cf. St. Hilary, Fragmentum, II, 16.

If by the word "appeal" we understand not merely a judicial procedure of recourse to a supreme tribunal against a supposedly unjust sentence, but the solicitation for personal intervention by the pope under any circumstances when it is judged necessary, the right of appeal to Rome, in the Church, rests upon an indisputable tradition, that goes back to the very beginning of Christianity.<sup>47</sup> The heretics themselves—Marcion, Basilides, Martial, Fortunatus, Privatus—either directly or through delegated agents had sought the moral support of and communion with the Apostolic See. But at Sardica in 343 the question was presented in a more precise way. The determining cause for the meeting of the Council lay in the numerous appeals addressed to Pope Julius by Eastern bishops who had been unjustly deposed. As the Arians denied, in this case, that the bishop of Rome had the right to absolve those whom their synods had condemned, it was a matter of importance to promulgate fixed and precise regulations on this question. That is what the Fathers did in three famous canons, the third, fourth, and fifth. Hefele, the learned historian of the councils, sums up these canons as follows:

- "I. When a bishop has been deposed by his comprovincials at the Provincial Synod, but still thinks his cause a good one, he may, according to the fifth canon, either appeal to Rome himself, or through the judge of the first court.
- "2. Rome now decides whether the appeal shall be allowed or not. In the latter case, it confirms the sentence of the first court; in the former, it appoints a second court.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> In this way we must solve the discussions that have arisen on the question whether the Council of Sardica introduced a disciplinary innovation, in regulating the exercise of the right of appeal to the pope. That the Council did so has been held by Peter de Marca, Quesnel, Dupin, Richer, and Febronius, as also certain Gallicans and Jansenists. Their arguments are refuted by Natalis Alexander (*Hist. eccles.*, fourth century, dissertation 28, proposition 1, pp. 461 f.). Hefele says: "The right of the pope to receive appeals was involved in the idea of the primacy as a divine institution." (Hefele, II, 122.) Cf. Revue de l'école des Chartes, IV (1853), 105–127; Des appels en cour de Rome jusqu'au concile de Sardique.

- "3. Rome nominates as judges for the second court bishops from the neighborhood of the province in question.
- "4. To this court the pope may, however, also send legates of his own, who will then take the presidency in his name.
- "5. In case a bishop deposed by the first court appeals to Rome, his see may not be given to another until Rome has decided, that is, has either confirmed the sentence of the first court or appointed a court of appeal. In the latter case it is, of course, understood that the sentence of the second court must be awaited before anything can be decided as to any fresh appointment to the see." 48

Thus the movements of revolt that came from the East brought about a firmer organization of the hierarchy. The bishops of the West, threatened by the Easterners in their faith and their desire to preserve the unity of the Church, felt more keenly than ever the need of a strong discipline; and they gathered more closely about the successor of St. Peter.<sup>49</sup>

Unfortunately at that very time the dissenting part of the Council was meeting in a city of Thrace, at Philippopolis, under the pretence of there continuing the Council by themselves. The Fathers of Sardica sent three letters communicating their decisions respectively to Pope Julius, head of the Roman Church, to all the Churches of Christendom in general, and to the Church of Alexandria in particular. At almost the

48 Hefele, II, 128. The Greek and Latin text of the twenty canons of Sardica will be found in Hefele, II, 109–157. The Council of Sardica is famous in history chiefly because of these three canons. From the time of Hincmar of Rheims down to our own day, disputes have arisen with regard to their interpretation. Hincmar, and in agreement with him the Gallican Richer and the Jansenists Van Espen and Febronius, maintained that in these canons there is no question of an appeal in the strict sense, but simply of a review of the trial in the court of first instance. Edmund Richer maintained further that the right established in favor of Pope Julius did not pass on to his successors. For an exposition of these errors and their refutation, see Hefele, II, 122–124. On the question of the right of appeal, considered from the point of view of the East, see Bernardakis, Les Appels au pape dans l'Église grecque jusqu'a Photius, in the Echos d'Orient, 1903, pp. 30–42, 118–136, 248–257.

<sup>49</sup> At one time it was thought that the Fathers of Sardica formulated a Creed. The more recent view is that the Creed of Sardica was drawn up by Hosius, but not adopted by the Council. Cf. Mansi, VI, 1202.

same time that these letters appeared, there was issued a solemn encyclical drawn up by the bishops assembled at Philippopolis, written in such a way as to make it appear that it was the authentic conclusion of the council convoked at Sardica. It said: "We beg the Lord that the Holy Catholic Church preserve the bond of charity in the orthodoxy of the faith. . . . We ask that the holy tradition of our fathers and the rule of the Church remain firm and unshakable." The document closed with the anathema against Athanasius, Marcellus of Ancyra, all the deposed bishops or priests who had appealed to Rome, and against Hosius and Pope Julius as guilty of having received those appeals. The document was probably dated, not from the city where it was written, but from Sardica so as to create a confusion and the better to appear as an authentic act of the Council.<sup>50</sup> The Eusebians' trick succeeded in Africa, where the Council of Sardica was looked upon as semi-Arian.51

The convocation of a universal council did not, then, bring peace.<sup>52</sup> The Council of Sardica definitely set forth the jurisdictional supremacy of the Church of Rome over all the Churches; yet, by the withdrawal of the Eusebians and the

<sup>50</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires (1732 ed.), VI, 142; Ceillier, Historie générale des auteurs sacrés, IV, 699.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> St. Augustine fell into this error. Seeing that a document of this council excommunicated Athanasius, whose orthodoxy was attested from other sources, St. Augustine concluded that the Council of Sardica was semi-Arian. (St. Augustine, *Contra Cresconium*, P. L., XLIII, 176, 516, 576.)

<sup>52</sup> Was the Council of Sardica ecumenical? It seems beyond question that Pope Julius and the emperors, when convoking it, intended to give it this character. Yet, in fact, at no period has any authority considered the Council of Sardica ecumenical. The single fact of the separation of the Eusebians was not enough to destroy its ecumenical character; otherwise we would have to grant to heretics the power of making an ecumenical council impossible. But the Church herself has not seen fit to give this authority to the Council of Sardica. A most venerable council it remains, but a particular one, notwithstanding the contentions of Baronius, Natalis Alexander, and Mansi. Alexander was expressly blamed by the Roman censors for maintaining the ecumenical character of the Council of Sardica. Cf. Natalis Alexander, Historia ecclesiastica, IV, 460.

perfidy of their tactics, it became the starting-point of the schism that would afflict Christendom, with occasional periods of calm, until the day of the final rupture.

### The Pagan Spirit

Profiting by all these divisions, paganism again raised its head. Its mythology and worship were discredited, but it continued the propagation of its spirit through the circus, the school, and the practice of magic. The ancient circus, with its bloody gladiatorial combats, its indecent pantomimes, its licentious songs, and its ritualistic processions in which statues of the gods were carried, offended charity, modesty, and Christian faith. In the schools, of whatever grade, teachers seductively inspired the young with enthusiastic worship of the heroes of fable, who may not have been considered divinities to be adored, but at least were regarded as symbols of earthly beauty and sinful passions. Magic and superstition were widespread among the populace; and in 337 Firmicus Maternus, an astrologer, in a book dedicated to the Emperor, tried to raise astrology to the status of real science.<sup>53</sup> And there seems to have been some superstition in those sacramental formulas of the law which Constantine's two sons proscribed in 342 as a verbal trap for pleaders: aucupatio syllabarum. 54 Thus, while the intrigues and disputes of Arianism were rending the Church, pagan claims asserted themselves with greater boldness. Christian worship was caricatured in satires and here and there efforts were made to revive the worship of the ancient gods.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Was this Firmicus Maternus, the pagan author of the *Mathesis*, the same person as Firmicus Maternus, the Christian author of *De errore profanarum religionum*, which appeared about 347? Mommsen (*Hermes*, XXIX, 468 f.) rejects the identity; Clifford H. Moore, in his doctorate thesis (*Julius Firmicus Maternus*), holds that they are one and the same person.

<sup>54</sup> Justinian Code, bk. 2, title 27 (alias 58).

### The Sons of Constantine

In the presence of these attempts to resurrect the old idolatry, the attitude of Constantine's sons was dubious. The Christian Sozomen and the pagan Libanius both say that Constantine's sons closed all the temples. 55 But Symmachus, even while criticizing Constantius for removing the statue of Victory that stood in the Senate, praises him for favoring the pagan priesthood, for the respect shown the consecrated virgins, and the traditional ceremonies of the Roman religion.<sup>56</sup> In fact we see Constantius and Constans, under the impulse of diverse influences, now proscribe and now honor the pagan religion. In a law dated 341, the two Emperors ordered "that superstition cease and that the foolishness of the sacrifices be abolished." 57 A year later they commanded that the temples in the neighborhood of Rome be repaired at government expense, because, they said, "it was in connection with many of them that the games of the circus and certain celebrations had their origin, and we should not destroy what furnishes the Roman people with their customary pleasures." 58 A similar inconsistency is to be observed in the laws which the Emperors made in favor of Christianity. Although in accord with the Gospel teaching they protected the modesty of Christian virgins 59 and stigmatized certain infamies too long tolerated by the laws, 60 yet they yielded to base solicitations by their Arian flatterers in exempting from taxes those members of the clergy who engaged in business. 61

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55 Sozomen, III, 17; Libanius, Orations, p. 591.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Symmachus, Epistolae, X, 54.

<sup>57</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, II, 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Ibid., IX, xVII, 2, 3.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., XV, VIII, I.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., IX, VII, 3.

<sup>61 &</sup>quot;Si qui . . . alimoniae causa negotiationem exercere volunt, immunitate patientur." Ibid., IX, 11, 8.

#### Rome and Persia

Among the superstitions spreading through the Roman world, several seem to have originated in Persia. Between a magician and a magus the Latin made little distinction. In this verbal similarity we may perhaps see an historical indication. The great Constantine wisely saw, in the conflict that was bringing the Persian Empire to grips with that of Rome, a conflict of religion as well as of politics. Tillemont writes: "Constantine prepared for the war against the Persians, not only as an emperor, but also as a Christian." <sup>62</sup> As we have already noted, he was not satisfied with merely defending the purity of the faith in his Empire, but was solicitous for the security of Christians in the Empire of the Persians and to this end intervened energetically with Sapor. <sup>63</sup> But the sons of Constantine had neither his political penetration nor that perseverance in moderation which is a sign of real strength.

It is beyond our scope to recount the phases of the great war which broke out immediately after Constantine's death and placed the two empires in conflict for the whole duration of the reigns of Constantius and Julian the Apostate. One of the first acts of Sapor II was to impose a double tax upon "all the number of the Nazarenes," *i. e.*, all the Christians, because, says the edict, "they dwell in our territory and share in the dispositions of Caesar, our enemy." This accusation was one of the chief reasons for the terrible persecution that soon began in Persia against the Christians. 64

It is fair to state that the Christians of Persia were, as a whole, clearly hostile to Sapor II. "Ground down by the Persians, regarded as belonging to a caste born for servitude, the Christians of Chaldea and Mesopotamia envied their neigh-

<sup>62</sup> Tillemont, Histoire des empereurs, IV, 265.

<sup>68</sup> See supra, p. 89.

<sup>64</sup> Labourt, La Christianisme dans l'empire perse, p. 46.

bors, who were under the rule of the infinitely less arbitrary Roman legislation." <sup>65</sup> Therein the magi had an excuse for stirring the king of Persia against the Christians. And they made use of it with Sapor. <sup>66</sup> But mere religious fanaticism explains the pitiless repression which the king ordered in 339–340.

#### St. Simon

The edict subjecting the Christians to a double head-tax was followed by a second edict, ordering the confiscation of the churches and their destruction in case of resistance, then by a general decree of persecution against the Christians.<sup>67</sup> The chief victim of the persecution was the patriarch Simon bar Sabbae, who was put to death in 341. He occupied the see of the royal cities Seleucia-Ctesiphon for thirteen years and, by his rare qualities, merited the high esteem of the ruler. But, we are told by the historian of the persecution,<sup>68</sup> he was arrested at the instigation of the Jews, who enjoyed great credit with the queen mother, Ephra Hormiz. The Acts of his martyrdom recall the finest scenes of the great persecution of the preceding centuries.

The bishop, ordered to collect from his faithful and transmit to the government the double tax imposed by Sapor, declined to do so, saying that his community was poor and that it was not the part of a bishop to grind down his people. He was put in chains, along with two of the priests that formed

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>66</sup> Duval, Littérature syriaque, p. 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> See the text of these decrees in Assemani, Acta sanctorum martyrum, and in Bedjan, Acta martyrum et sanctorum.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> The account of King Sapor II's persecution of the Christians in Persia was written by St. Maruta (alias Maruthas), bishop of Maipherkad (alias Maipherqat, Martyropolis), who lived in the latter part of the fourth century and the early part of the fifth. (St. Maruta's Acta of the Persian Martyrs is translated by W. Wright in the Journal of Sacred Literature, October 1865-January 1866. Tr.) Cf. Duval, Littérature syriaque, pp. 132 f.

his presbyterial council,<sup>69</sup> and was brought before the king. Sapor promised to spare his life if he would consent to adore the sun.

"I recognize only one God," Simon replied; "it is Jesus Christ, who died on the cross."

"How can you adore a dead God, who was hanged on the infamous gibbet? Come, now, adore the sun, by whose power everything subsists."

"The sun put on mourning when its Creator died, as a slave does at the death of his master."

"Your insolence is reason enough for me to put you to death, and so preserve your companions by terrifying them by your execution."

"I fear nothing. God will crown us."

Sapor ordered him imprisoned until the following day so as to give him time to reflect and change his mind.

The next day Sapor appealed to their former friendship. Simon was immovable. Order was given to lead him to his execution along with his two comrades. To scare him, the king commanded that the latter be slain in the presence of the bishop. The holy old man exhorted them to die with courage. But, at the last moment, Hanania, one of the two priests, at sight of the sword raised over him, trembled and was ready to yield. Then, from the midst of the royal officers, a voice was heard. "Hanania, put off all fear and close your eyes until you are in possession of the light eternal." It was the voice of the prefect of the royal workmen, Pusaik. The king, in anger, cried out: "Pusaik, have I not appointed you to high office?" "As for the office to which you have appointed me," replied Pusaik, "it matters little to me, for it is full of cares, and I prefer these men's suffering, because it is full of jov. I am a Christian, I believe in the God preached by Simon bar

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> The martyrology of 412 gives us the names of all the priests who formed the presbyterium. Labourt, op. cit., p. 64.

Sabbae." Shaking with rage, Sapor cried out: "Let this fellow not die like the others. Tear out his tongue through his neck, that this example may make all who live fear me." The king's order was carried out. Pusaik died instantly. His daughter, who was a nun, was likewise slain. Last of all, Bar Sabbae died. The day was Friday of the week of the Azymes, the anniversary of the Savior's death.<sup>70</sup>

# Sapor's Persecution

The proceedings against the Christians were neither constant nor regular. Often the martyrs were denounced to the royal officers. More generally officials of any rank initiated the prosecution. Satraps or mere heads of villages, each one arrogating to himself the right to imprison clergy and laity at his own will. The Mazdean priests were especially conspicuous for zeal, which reached the point of fanaticism. The accused were subjected to precautionary imprisonment, which might last a few months or several years, at the will of the persecutors. As at Rome, the judges made use of torture. Usually the execution followed the last questioning. Most often the martyrs were put to death by the sword or were stoned to death.

But at times Oriental ingenuity devised more refined tortures. In some cases, as with Pusaik, the martyr's throat was slit in such a way that his tongue could be pulled through the opening. Again, as in the case of Tarbo, the martyr was cut in two or his joints were broken. This frightful torture was sometimes inflicted methodically and piecemeal. The executioners' ingenious cruelty invented the torture of the "nine deaths." It is described as follows in the Passion of St. James, one of the most genuine of the saints' Passions: 71 "First the

<sup>70</sup> Labourt, op. cit., pp. 64-68.

<sup>71</sup> Bedjan, op. cit., IV, 197.

fingers were cut off, then the toes, then the wrists, then the ankles, then the arms above the elbows, the knees, ears, and nose, and finally the head." The Beginning with the year 343, the persecution raged almost continually in the northern provinces, Beit Garmai and Adiabene. The presence of the royal armies was required there by the war against the Romans. For forty years the blood of martyrs poured out on the soil of Persia. If we are to accept Sozomen's statement, in 379 sixteen thousand Christians gave their lives for the faith. This figure must be only a guess. In any event, Sapor's persecution was not second, either in duration or intensity, to the persecutions undergone by the Churches of the Roman world.

In 343, the date when the Council of Sardica closed, less than seven years after the death of Constantine, not only was the religious unity of the Empire gravely endangered by the most perfidious of the heresies, not only was a group of Eastern bishops separated from Rome by a painful split, but the war of the Persians threatened both the security of the Empire and the future of Christianity at all points where the Persion influence would be victorious. Aided by a religious dualism which brought conflicting geniuses face to face in a world arena and by the occult practices which the magi's influence would spread, a new form of paganism seemed well on the way to the conquest of the nations which had been evangelized by the apostles of Jesus Christ.

<sup>72</sup> Labourt, op. cit., pp. 58-61.

<sup>73</sup> Sozomen, II, 12.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., II, 14.

#### CHAPTER V

# From the Council of Sardica to the Death of Emperor Constans (343-350)

THE Eusebians did not find peace by withdrawing from the Council of Sardica and from Rome and by proclaiming the autonomy of their Churches and their synods. The Council of Philippopolis was followed by an unprecedented agitation in the Eastern provinces. When they returned home, the dissenting bishops were generally ill received. They were blamed for abandoning their brother-bishops, for running away from the discussion, and were looked upon as deserters and cowards. They avenged themselves with cruelty. For Lucius, bishop of Adrianople, who had made complaint against them, they obtained from Emperor Constantius banishment in chains. For ten workmen who insulted them, they obtained a death sentence. For the two bishops, Macarius and Asterius, who had deserted them and gone over to the ranks of the orthodox, they obtained relegation to the depths of Libya. "The condition of affairs throughout the East amounted almost to a reign of terror." 1

However, the work of pacification progressed. Constantius, ever absorbed by his war against the Persians, continued to depend upon his brother for the regulation of religious matters. Constans was less courageous and capable than Constantius, but he had a more upright character and more sincere faith. He willingly aided the work of conciliation which the very bitterness of the strife rendered urgent. The task was not an easy one. Before the Arian quarrel was settled

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 181.

in the East, the Donatist quarrel revived in Africa, more intense than before. The ceaseless collision of pagan customs and Christian customs, more obvious in Rome than elsewhere, added to these conflicts. Yet the Emperor of the West, before dying, could say that he had helped to give the Christian leaders a few years of comparative peace, during which the Church was able to develop in her worship, her discipline, and the deep study of her doctrine, with relative freedom.

### Council of Antioch (344)

All historians admit that Emperor Constantius' change of attitude in the Arian question was largely due to his brother's influence.2 The excesses of the antinicene party seem also to have turned him against them. In 344 about Easter time, he hurriedly convoked a synod at Antioch to pass judgment on the bishop of that city, Stephen, a tireless Eusebian who attempted in an infamous manner to entrap the two deputies of the Council of Sardica.4 Stephen was deposed. It was probably this same council that drew up the new Creed which, because of its length, was called the macrostic Creed. It contained the Creed of Philippopolis, that is, the fourth symbol of Antioch, but with explanations and developments that marked a progress toward a doctrinal agreement. Thus, in speaking of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, it proclaimed the Son like to the Father in all things (τῷ πατρὶ κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιος) and declared that both have the same divine excellence ( to  $\tau \hat{\eta}$ s

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Duchesne, op. cit., II, 183, and Le Bachelet in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1816.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Some authors say 345.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> When the two deputies, Vincent of Capua and Euphrates of Cologne, while on their journey were stopping at Antioch, Stephen had a woman of ill-repute enter their bed-room at night. At an appointed time she was to cry out and thus create a scandal. But the trick was discovered and turned to the discredit of its schemer. The event is related by St. Athanasius, *History of the Arians*, no. 20, and Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, VII, 8.

θεότητος ἀξίωμα). The absence of the word homoousios, a few expressions taken from Subordinationism, and especially the insistence that they should affirm all the points compromised by the real or supposed doctrines of Photinus and Marcellus of Ancyra, indicated a persisting hostility against the party of Athanasius.<sup>5</sup>

But the great Bishop preferred to see in this document only what tended to conciliation. He openly disavowed whatever compromising doctrines of Marcellus it might contain, and after that had no relations with him. As to Photinus, the reckless disciple of Marcellus, his views were evidently untenable. In a council held at Milan late in 344 or at the beginning of 345, the Westerners consented to pronounce anathema against him. His theory that the Word was simply a dilatation of God and consequently fundamentally indistinct from the Father, was unacceptable in every respect.

#### Return of Athanasius

In the summer of 344, Emperor Constantius, by a kindly act, encouraged the conciliatory movement. He allowed the exiled clergy of Alexandria to return to their city. The death of the usurper Gregory (June 25, 345) enabled Constantius to go farther on the path of pacification. He wrote to Athanasius, inviting him to return to his diocese. Athanasius first went to Treves to consult Emperor Constans, his protector, then to Rome, where Pope Julius strongly urged him to accept the imperial invitation and even gave him a letter to the Alexandrians praising him highly. About midsummer 345, Athanasius went to Antioch and there saw Constantius. The Emperor gave him letters for the magistrates of Alexandria. These letters were most kindly toward Athanasius and revoked all

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> St. Athanasius, De Synodis, no. 26.

<sup>6</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, no. 21.

measures that had been taken against him. On October 21, 346, the holy Patriarch made his entry into his episcopal city amidst indescribable enthusiasm. The people and the city officials went far beyond Alexandria to meet him. St. Antony, at sight of the passing throngs on their way to meet the Bishop, was unable to join them on account of his old age. But he sang his *Nunc dimittis*, happy at beholding finally the triumph of the cause for which he had offered so many mortifications and prayers.

#### Donatism in Africa.

While the Roman Pontiff received news of this triumphal entry, his heart was deeply afflicted by rumors coming to him for several months from the Churches of Africa.

The Donatist movement, since its condemnation by the Council of Arles in 314 and by Emperor Constantine, had passed from the arena of religious controversy to that of political opposition. It did not become a kind of secessionist agitation against Roman domination; to say this would be to apply altogether modern notions to ancient times. In no sense did there exist at that time what we would now call an "African nationality." The members of the sect were not seeking to separate from Rome, but at home they wanted to be masters of the organization of their Churches and of the symbols of their belief; and, in the demand for these so-called rights, they felt a bitter stubbornness that reached the point of fanaticism. Following the Council of Sardica, their leader, Donatus the Great, whose subtle and cultivated mind might have shone in the religious controversy, maintained that the Fathers of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> St. Athanasius, Festal Letters, Index, P. G., XXVI, 1355.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Acta sanctorum, May, III, 326; Histoire de saint Pakhôme et de ses communautés, previously unpublished Coptic and Arabic documents, published by E. Amelineau in the Annales du Musée Guimet, XVII (1889), 656 f.

<sup>9</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 514 f.

Council thought as he did about those who gave up the Sacred Books.<sup>10</sup> Whether knowingly or not, he accepted, as an official document of the Council, the letter of the dissenters of Philippopolis. A little later, in a widely circulated letter, he maintained that baptism could be validly conferred only by the Donatists. But on the theological questions he was not followed. The Donatists preferred to make use of other arguments.

#### The Circumcellions

Abetted by the disorder which the long religious discussions of recent years had caused, a movement of popular clamor developed in the lowest ranks of African society. Bands of fanatics roamed through the country districts, pillaging everything on their way. In them the Donatists saw a power, and used them to defend their cause and to fight the "traitors." They decorated these brigands with the title "athletes of Christ." The Catholics dubbed them more fittingly, calling them "Circumcellions," or cellar-prowlers, because it was their practice to sack the cellars and granaries.

"Armed with stout cudgels, they appeared everywhere, on the public roads and in the markets, prowled about cottages, whence came their name of Circumcellions, and kept a strict watch over farms and country houses. It was not only in the quarrel of Donatus and Caecilian that they interested themselves. Sturdy redressors of wrongs, the enemies of all social inequalities, they eagerly took the part of small holders against proprietors, of slaves against their masters, and of debtors against their creditors. At the first call of the oppressed, or those who pretended to be so, and especially of the Donatist clergy when they found themselves hemmed in at close quarters by the police, the Circumcellions appeared on the scene in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> On the Donatist teaching regarding those who gave up the sacred books, see Mourret, op. cit., I, 502.

fierce gangs uttering their war-cry: Deo laudes! and brandishing their famous clubs." 11

Donatus the Great himself adopted the tone of those who had become his most powerful auxiliaries. In 337, replying to Gregory, the praetorian prefect of Italy, he addressed him at the beginning of the letter thus: "Gregory, dirt of the Senate, shame of the prefecture."

#### Banishment of Donatus

These disturbances and brutal protests were only the prelude of the open revolt that broke out in 347. Emperor Constantius sent two legates to Africa, Paul and Macarius, commissioned to calm the mobs by a distribution of numerous reliefs and to labor for the general reconciliation. Donatus received the imperial envoys with these words: "What has the Emperor to do with the Church?" He meant the Church of the Donatists.<sup>12</sup> This was the signal for the revolt. In Numidia, Bishop Donatus of Bagai and the priest Marculus, at news of the arrival of Paul and Macarius, had the gates closed and called the Circumcellions to their aid. The imperial legates, less for the purpose of making an assault than with a view to protecting themselves from a sudden attack, asked for reinforcements. Bloody conflicts and veritable battles ensued. The imperial troops at length mastered the situation. Among the dead were Donatus of Bagai and Marculus, who were considered martyrs by the Donatists. Donatus the Great, Donatist bishop of Carthage, and certain other bishops of his party were exiled. Donatism appeared to be overcome; and so thoroughly that, in a Council of Carthage (349), Bishop Gratus, successor of Caecilian, proclaimed that God "had given reli-

<sup>11</sup> Duchesne, op. cit., II, 189.

<sup>12</sup> St. Optatus, Against the Donatists, III, 3.

gious unity to Africa." But Donatism was no more dead than was Arianism. Soon the two heresies reappear as perfidious and violent as in their worst days. From 347 onward, however, in Numidia as also in Egypt, the Church was able to enjoy a certain calm.

# The Danger of Paganism

There was reason to think that in Italy also paganism was dying. Little by little, churches took the place of the temples, which were falling in ruins. Provided with official favor and dominating the imperial festivities, Christianity held an evergrowing place in public and private life. Priests and faithful alike seemed to be without any thought of insecurity, when, in 348,18 their tranquillity was disturbed by the appearance of a certain spirited writing, entitled De errore profanarum religionum. It was written by one Julius Firmicus Maternus, a convert from paganism whom some critics have considered to be the author of the *Mathesis*. The work appears to have been written in Sicily. 14 It was addressed to the Emperors Constans and Constantius, urging them to destroy the remains of paganism. The style is vivacious, sharp, biting, sometimes harsh and even violent, when it denounces the vileness of paganism. Yet, in places, it is mild even to the point of unction, when there is question of the Christian mysteries.

Maternus was a man of extensive erudition. He attacks the pagan beliefs of the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Persians, and the Africans. He ridicules the false gods and their credulous adorers. He makes fun of Adonis, who, though a god, did not know that snares were being laid for him; and Mars, who, to make himself loved by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> In chapter 30 an allusion to a defeat of the Persians in the strife with Rome, enables us to fix the date of the work, with great probability, as 348.

<sup>14</sup> This inference is based on the topographical details about Sicily, in chapter 17.

Venus, changes himself into a pig. He laughs at the Egyptians who wept over the death of Osiris, when they should have wept only at their own stupidity, and the Phrygians, who were quite right in calling the earth the mother of the gods, since their gods are merely a bit of dirt more or less well fashioned.

But the evil of pagan idolatry is deeper. Maternus says: "Let us not simply laugh at it. It should make us tremble, because it is the glorification of all man's evil passions." In vigorous and unvarnished words that cannot be quoted, he recalls the incredible debaucheries committed in honor of Juno. "Blush, therefore, ye wretches," he writes. "When you have to present your body before the great Judge, He will not recognize it as the body He made, for it will be so deformed by the devil himself." "What infamy is there," he says, "which has not its model in the exploits of your false gods? He who is consumed by vice needs for his encouragement merely to look upon your Apollo, your Hercules, your Bacchus, and your great god Jupiter: bull, satyr, or indecent swan." 16

By way of conclusion the author, on the basis of Old Testament texts, reminds the Emperors of their duty to extirpate the last roots of paganism in this world which God has confided to their rule. By thus doing, they will be watching over the true interests of those very ones whom they strike, because a sick man, when he is cured, is grateful to the physician for the painful operation that saved him. And God especially who has given them so many pledges of His protection, will bless their Empire with fresh victories, greater prosperity, and more stable and glorious peace.<sup>17</sup>

Several laws which the Emperors enacted against supersti-

<sup>15</sup> De errore profanarum religionum, chap. 4; P. L., XII, 991.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., chap. 13; P. L., XII, 1007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Ibid., chap. 30; P. L., XII, 1048–1050. Cf. Ceillier, Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés, IV, 310–313.

tion and magic may have been the result of this earnest appeal of Firmicus Maternus. To his influence are attributed several popular movements, the destruction of many temples and even the degradation of some tombs. The sepulchers of the great families along the Roman roads were generally ornamented with pagan decorations. Some Christians, aroused by Maternus' invectives, pillaged them. Constans became angered. It is thought that the laws he made, providing severe penalties for violation and spoliation of tombs, were prompted by these regrettable excesses of mistaken zeal.

### St. Athanasius' Against the Arians

While Firmicus Maternus, a layman, was writing his vigorous denunciations, a more positive work was being undertaken by certain bishops—St. Athanasius in Egypt, St. Cyril of Jerusalem in Palestine, and St. Aphraates in Persia. Against the attacks by Arians and pagans, they established the veritable foundations of Catholic dogma and piety.

After returning to his diocese of Alexandria, Athanasius assembled a council to confirm that of Sardica. Then he profited by the calm he enjoyed to publish three important books: the work on the Decrees of the Nicene Council, a small work on the Thought of Dionysius of Alexandria, and, according to some authorities, 19 his four Discourses against the Arians. The purpose of the book on the Nicene Council was to show, according to his own words, that "the Council of Nicaea, in formulating its definitions against the Arian heresy, did what was needful and what was dictated by piety." The second book mentioned was written to vindicate the memory of a holy

<sup>18</sup> Theodosian Code, IX, xvII, 1-3. Cf. De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, III, 132-135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Cavallera, Saint Athanase, p. xi. Some critics place the writing of this work at a later date, 356 to 361; others prefer an earlier date, 338-339.

bishop of Alexandria; the Arians were interpreting in their own favor a certain letter, written by that bishop in 260.

The Discourses against the Arians is Athanasius' principal doctrinal work. Bossuet praises these discourses as "masterpieces of eloquence and learning" in which is to be found "a power and wealth of expression as well as that noble simplicity which makes a Demosthenes." 20 In these four discourses, which are closely connected with one another and really form a single work, Athanasius sets forth the Arian teaching and refutes all its arguments. But he chooses to consider the doctrine as a whole from the point of view of the Redemption. The truth which he wants particularly to safeguard is that we are redeemed beings, freed, and freed for eternity. But if Christ was not God, our liberation would not be a true redemption or an eternal one. If freed by a creature, we would fall under the domination of a created master; this would simply be a new enslavement. And this half-freedom would not be eternal.

# St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Athanasius, even when expounding the faith, is always a controversialist, never forgetting the refutation of heresy or irreligion. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, at least during the early part of his life, is merely a catechist. But he is a catechist whose chief book (the *Catechetical Lectures*) is of the utmost importance for the history of the Church. In fact, it constitutes, next to the *Didache*, the earliest and most extensive work of this kind that we possess.<sup>21</sup>

Cyril was born in 313 in Jerusalem or near it.22 At first he

 $<sup>^{20}</sup>$  Bossuet, Défense de la tradition et des Saints Pères, Part I, bk. 4, chap. 12 (Lachat ed., IV, 148 f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> In the office of this saint (fourth lesson), the Church gives magnificent praise to St. Cyril's *Catecheses*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> A recent biographer of this saint, J. Mader (Der Cyrillus Bischof von Jerusalem), after a critical and painstaking examination, adopts this date.

followed the monastic life.<sup>28</sup> St. Maximus, his predecessor in the see of Jerusalem, ordained him a priest in 343. Five years later he preached the instructions (catecheses) to the catechumens. The lectures have made his name immortal.

In the fourth century, by catechesis <sup>24</sup> was meant the oral teaching that served as a preparation for the reception of baptism. There were four kinds of catechesis: that which preceded admission to the catechumenate, that of simple catechumens, that of the "competent" catechumens (*i. e.*, those admitted to immediate preparation for the reception of baptism), and lastly that which was addressed to the newly baptized. This last was called Mystagogical catechesis. St. Cyril's catechesis belongs to these last two categories. He preached it, not from memory, but out of the fulness of his mind and heart, in Jerusalem before and after the feast of Easter, 348. We possess these lectures as they were stenographically recorded by his hearers.<sup>25</sup>

In these informal instructions, St. Cyril's words possess the qualities and defects of the spoken style: simple and lively, now encumbered by digressions and parentheses, now urgent and pathetic, but always practical, always suited to the mental and moral needs of his listeners. It has been noted, with a certain amount of scandal among Catholics, with undisguised joy among the enemies of our faith, that Cyril never speaks of Arius and his followers, that he never uses those expressions which in his day stirred up so much dispute. This was simple prudence on his part. His was a work of edification, not of controversy. It may also be that, when he was delivering

<sup>23</sup> Catechetical Lectures, Lecture 12, P. G., XXXIII, 321.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> During the first two centuries, the word "catechesis" had a wider meaning. The organization of the catechumenate gave it a more precise sense.

<sup>25</sup> Le Bachelet, art. "Cyrille de Jerusalem" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, III, 2534. The first eighteen catechetical lectures were delivered in Lent, the five Mystogogical lectures were preached during Easter week. On the stenographic methods of this period, see a curious work by Prosper and Eugene Guénin, Histoire de la sténographie dans l'antiquité et au moyen âge.

these lectures, he had not yet grasped the full bearing of the strife that was setting Eusebians and Nicaeans in violent conflict with each other. Later, after some fluctuation, not in his ideas but in his relations, he took his stand in the ranks of the moderate group that defended orthodoxy while avoiding phrases which were apt to shock the adversaries.

### St. Cyril's Doctrine

The substance of his doctrine is faultlessly orthodox. He professes, with utmost clearness, the mystery of the Trinity, the consubstantiality of the Son and the Father, and the absolute authority of ecclesiastical tradition in matters of faith. He says: "Our hope is in the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. We preach not three gods; let the Marcionites be mute. We neither divide the Holy Trinity, like some, nor do we as Sabellius introduce confusion." <sup>26</sup> The "some" are evidently the followers of Arius. Cyril says further: "He is a perfect Father of a perfect Son: who has delivered everything to Him who is begotten. <sup>27</sup> . . . Never let us say, There was a time when the Son was not." <sup>28</sup>

As to our Lord's real presence in the Eucharist, he speaks with unsurpassed vigor, saying: "In the figure of bread is given to thee His body, and in the figure of wine His blood; that thou, by partaking of the body and blood of Christ, mightest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him." <sup>29</sup> On the propitiatory value of the holy sacrifice of the mass, he is no less explicit. He says:

"Through the sacrifice of propitiation we entreat God for the common peace of the Church. . . . For all who stand in need of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Catechetical Lectures, XVI, 4 (Oxford Library of Fathers, II, 204).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> πάντα παραδούς, ibid., VII, 5 (Oxford Library, II, 81).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid., XI, 17 (Oxford Library, II, 118).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., XXII, 3 (Oxford Library, II, 271).

succor we all supplicate and offer this sacrifice. Then we commemorate also those who have fallen asleep before us. . . For those who have fallen asleep we offer up Christ, sacrificed for our sins, propitiating our merciful God both for them and for ourselves." <sup>30</sup>

Cyril's doctrine about the Church is equally remarkable. He regards the Church as the infallible authority from which we have the canon of Scriptures and the symbol of faith which we must follow and practice.<sup>31</sup> The office of the Church is not merely to instruct us in the truths necessary for salvation; it trains us in our practical life by regulating our morals. In this connection the holy bishop draws an appealing picture of the moral ideal to which Christians ought to tend. He also gives us an interesting glimpse of many practices in use in the Church of his time: the continence of priests, the community life of virgins consecrated to God,<sup>32</sup> the penitential life of the ascetics, <sup>33</sup> the veneration of relics,<sup>34</sup> and of the cross,<sup>35</sup> the practice of exorcism,<sup>36</sup> and invocation of the saints.<sup>37</sup>

We must not expect to find in St. Cyril's *Lectures* a complete doctrine of the sacraments. He is concerned only with those for which he is preparing candidates: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. Of these three sacraments he gives a detailed account in which the history of liturgy and of Christian piety can find most valuable documents.<sup>38</sup> In all these expositions Cyril carefully avoids any expression that

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30 Ibid., XXIII, 8-10 (Oxford Library, II, 275 f.).

81 Ibid., V, 12; XVIII, 23.

32 πάντα παραδούς, XII, 25.

83 Ibid., IV, 24 f.

84 Ibid., XVII, 30; XVIII, 16.

35 Ibid., IV, 10, 14; XIII, 4.

86 Ibid., XX, 3.

87 Ibid., XXIII, 9.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Three catechetical lectures are devoted to the sacrament of baptism: the third, nineteenth, and twentieth. The twenty-first treats of Confirmation; the twenty-second and twenty-third, of the Eucharist.

might inject division into the minds of his hearers. Instead of the philosophical terms recently introduced in theology, he prefers the ancient phrases, thus avoiding occasion for vexatious disputes and limiting himself to instructive and pious treatment of the subject. Amid the militant and turbulent literature of the fourth century, it is restful to peruse these pages marked by so calm a tone and so simple and touching an accent.

### St. Aphraates

St. Aphraates wrote in Persia during the persecution. His sermons appeared about the year 345.39 We possess few precise data about his life and the date of his death. A marginal note, found in an old manuscript, says he lived in a monastery north of Mosul. Probably he was clothed with the episcopal dignity and died a martyr.<sup>40</sup> The theology of Aphraates, the "Persian sage," as he has been called, possesses neither the breadth nor depth of the theology of the Greek Fathers. He seems to have been unaware of Arianism and the Council of Nicaea. At the time he was preaching his sermons, the religious disputes agitating the Roman world had not yet passed the frontiers of Persia. His testimony is the more precious because of its agreement with the doctrines maintained by St. Athanasius. In this respect the study of his sermons has great interest for the theologian.41 Aphraates taught the adoration of Christ, the Son of God, as "equal to God," 42 as "sharing in the nature of God." 48 He does say that "above

 $<sup>^{39}</sup>$  The fourteenth homily refers to disturbances that occurred in February and March 344.

<sup>40</sup> Acta sanctorum, November, II.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> It will be found in Graffin and Nau's *Patrologia syriaca*, published by Parisot and entitled *Aphraatis demonstrationes*. (Eight of the "Demonstrations" are translated in *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., vol. 13. Tr.)

<sup>42</sup> Aphraates, Demonstrations, I, 8.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., VI, 10.

the Son is the Father"; <sup>44</sup> but we cannot regard this as a trace of the Arian heresy, which he did not know, but as one of those Subordinationist phrases which are to be met with in the antenicene Fathers and which come, not so much from an inexact concept of the Trinity, as from the limitations of a theological diction still in formation.<sup>45</sup>

The idea which the venerable Bishop <sup>46</sup> gives of the Church is very beautiful. He shows it made up of all peoples and founded by Christ upon Peter, "the faithful witness set in the midst of the nations." <sup>47</sup> The Apostles John and James he calls "strong pillars of the Church," but Peter is its foundation. <sup>48</sup>

Aphraates furnishes valuable evidence in favor of the doctrine of original sin, the necessity of good works and of public penance. He describes the ceremonies of Baptism and the Eucharist, and refers to the sacrament of Holy Orders.

### Persecution in Persia

Persecution continued to decimate the Christians of the Persian Empire. In 343, Narses, bishop of Sahrgerd, was decapitated along with his disciple Joseph. That same year Bishop John of Arbel was seized with the priest James and put in prison, from which he was brought forth a year later only to have his head cut off. A most dramatic scene of the persecution of this period was in 347, when five nuns of the village of Bakasa were put to death. Two of them were named Mary, the three others were called Thecla, Martha, and Anna. They

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., IV, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> The theologians had not yet sufficiently distinguished the order of relation of the Persons and the absolute equality of the substance.

<sup>46</sup> Considering the esteem which Aphraates already enjoyed at the beginning of Sapor's persecution, we must suppose him to be advanced in age in 345. Cf. J. Parisot, art. "Aphraate" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1458.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Demonstrations, XI, 12. Cf. VI, 15; X, 4.

<sup>48</sup> Idem, XXIII, 12.

were arrested at the same time as a priest, named Paul, who possessed great riches. The governor began by confiscating Paul's possessions. Then he said to him: "I will restore your property to you if you adore the sun." The unfortunate Paul loved his wealth more than his soul. He apostatized. But the governor, who was hopeful of retaining Paul's wealth by his refusal, was disappointed. He then said: "I shall not believe in the sincerity of your apostacy unless you slay these five virgins with your own hand." Paul, whose soul was already stained by mortal sin and dominated by the devil, did not refuse to pay the forfeit which aroused the horror even of the pagans. But he did not recover possession of his property. The governor had him strangled the next night so as to be sure of the wealth he coveted. The Church honors St. Thecla and her four companions on June 6.49

Despite every difficulty, a revival of learning and piety was manifest in the bosom of Christianity, when Constans' tragic death <sup>50</sup> in 350 left the government of the whole Empire to Constantius. The sectarian tyranny of Constantine's second son would now be without any check. There was good reason to fear for the peace of the Church.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Assemani, *Acta sanctorum martyrum*, I, 123–127. On the historic value of these Acts, see Duval, *Littérature syriaque*, pp. 129 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> A troop of cavalry, under orders of the usurper Magnentius, overtook him near the Pyrenees just as he was preparing to enter Spain, and drove him to take his own life. "Thus perished that son of Constantine, without a struggle, without resistance, without in that empire, still filled with his father's name, a single voice being raised in his defence." De Broglie, *op. cit.*, III, 199.

#### CHAPTER VI

From the Death of Emperor Constans to the Coming of Julian the Apostate (350-361)

The ten years that followed the death of Emperor Constans were curiously diversified. From the mere consideration of outward events, we might regard them as the height of semi-Arianism. An all-powerful emperor placing his sovereign authority at the service of heresy; a pope bowing before this victory, with apparent defection; the venerable Hosius, formerly president of the Council of Nicaea, seeming to revoke his great work; the two most valiant champions of the great Council, Athanasius and Hilary, brutally exiled; the Christian people disturbed by so many boastful victories, so many apparent defections, and so many undeserved misfortunes: such is the picture which, at first glance, strikes our eye and disconcerts us.

But a closer and deeper examination reassures us. The Arian party, in its very triumphs, is hopelessly divided. In the orthodox camp, at St. Athanasius' side appears St. Hilary. Both of them, active even in exile, defend the Church with an experience enriched by strife and with a courage tempered by trial. Popular sympathy, for a moment misplaced, withdraws from the Arians and the various sects forming around them. We have seen the true aspect of their tactics. More and more manifestly their success comes especially from the protection with which the imperial power covers their plots. A change in the views of that power will be enough to turn their triumph into utter defeat.

#### Political Disturbances

The death of Emperor Constans upset both the Empire and the Church. The transfer of Constans' power to Constantius was not accomplished without terrible disturbances. While Magnentius succeeded in having himself acknowledged Emperor by the greater part of the West, Constantine's two daughters, Eutropia and Constantina, stirred up rivals in opposition to him. Eutropia presented her son Nepotian to the Romans; in Illyricum Constantina had an old general acclaimed, one Vertranion, a man of limited intelligence, but honest, brave, loyal to the memory of the great Constantine, and ready, it was said, to defend that emperor's work to the very death.

Constantius, who was carrying on a formidable war in the East against King Sapor, found himself in a critical situation. Whatever might be the outcome of the conflicts in Rome and Illyricum, he felt the West on the point of slipping from his hands. He presently learned, however, that Magnentius, after a sanguinary battle, had recovered Rome, that Nepotian had perished in the fight and that Eutropia had been slain. At length he was able to turn his steps toward the province occupied by Vertranion and won him to his cause. The old general, dazzled and disconcerted by his lofty dignity and crushed by the crown he had placed on his own brow, promptly laid it down at the feet of Constantine's son. Only Magnentius remained opposed to him. Constantius pursued him through Italy and into Gaul where, in 353, near Lyons, the usurper, abandoned by a large number of his soldiers, took his own life. The unity of the Empire was now established in favor of Constantius. But the memory of all this anguish and all these strifes would keep the Emperor's character embittered and suspicious, more than ever inclined to jealous despotism.

Furthermore, the semi-Arians, upon seeing Constans' power

fall, could not repress the expression of their joy. Even to the very heart and center of orthodoxy, the West was at last in the hands of a ruler devoted to their cause. And Constantius had no longer a brother or rival to consider. Their schemes would henceforth have an open field before them.

#### Photinus of Sirmium

After Vertranion's abdication, at the beginning of 351, Emperor Constantius fixed his residence at Sirmium in Pannonia. This city, thereafter the real capital of the Empire, became the chief scene of the sect's plotting. The Church of Sirmium was governed by one of the most earnest foes of Arianism, Bishop Photinus. But the excessive doctrines of this prelate were, as we know, compromising for the orthodox party. For a long time the semi-Arians had endeavored to exploit his errors so as to ruin the cause of Athanasius. A new campaign against Photinus might seem futile; the Western bishops, at the Councils of Sardica and Milan, had clearly condemned his theological errors by separating him from their communion. But a fresh manifestation seemed opportune to the enemies of orthodoxy.

The outstanding charge brought against the Catholics was that of being Sabellians. Photinus was at least suspect in this matter. The Emperor, upon setting foot in the West, had to declare himself against the Sabellian error. During the winter of 351 the leaders of the Eusebian party (including Basil of Ancyra, Macedonius of Mopsuestia, and Marcus of Arethusa) went to Sirmium and there held a synod. At this council Photinus was again condemned and a symbol of faith, followed by twenty-seven anathemas, was promulgated. This is the document known in history as the first formula of Sirmium. This symbol, which is recorded by St. Athanasius,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The council at Milan was held in 347.

St. Hilary, and Socrates,<sup>2</sup> has an orthodox appearance, but it avoids the use of the word *homoousios* (consubstantial) and, in a general way, the Nicene terminology. After the synod, Constantius expelled Photinus from the city of Sirmium and sent him into exile.<sup>3</sup>

This first incident was merely the prelude to a campaign of intrigues that would be continued under the pontificate of Pope Liberius. In 352, two events increased the confidence of the Eusebian party: the death of Pope Julius (April 12, 352) and, soon afterwards, the second marriage of Constantius, this time to a young noblewoman of Thessalonica, Aurelia Eusebia. Pope Julius had always shown himself to be Athanasius' firmest support. His successor, Liberius, a priest of irreproachable virtue, did not seem to possess the same sagacity or prudence.

The new empress was a woman of cultured mind, who prided herself on being a philosopher and was fond of taking part in intellectual discussions. She was easily seduced by a system of religion that accorded so much to reason, so little to authority. The Arians were always wonderful adepts in winning women to their cause. Eusebia, combining a gentle graciousness with the resources of a brilliant mind and ambitious will, soon exercised a powerful influence over Constantius. Militant and domineering souls are often the first to surrender to these subtle charms. From that hour the Emperor's religious policy becomes somewhat feminine in its clever evasions. The son of Constantine will never be willing to abandon the formulas consecrated at Nicaea. Like his father, he will ever regard them as the untouchable laws of the Empire as well as of religion. But he will ceaselessly labor

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> St. Athanasius, *De Synodis*, no. 27. The twenty-seven anathemas will be found in Hefele, II, 194-198.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Socrates, II, 30. The condemnation of Photinus was later confirmed by several councils, notably by the Second Ecumenical Council. (Mansi, III, 386, 560; XII, 41.)

to destroy the Nicene party, that resists him, to the advantage of the antinicene party, that flatters him. The famous "formulas of Sirmium," which are issued one after the other and are more and more misleading, will be the principal landmarks of that policy, which is inspired by Eusebia and always benefits the semi-Arian party.

#### Calumniation of St. Athanasius

But the question of doctrinal formulas was temporarily laid aside. At first the whole aim of the Eusebians was to bring about the condemnation of Athanasius and obtain ecclesiastical communion with the West.

With confident reliance on their new backing, they hurled themselves upon Athanasius as upon their prey. As formerly, there was an outburst of denunciations and atrocious calumnies. Pope Liberius and Emperor Constantius were won at the same time. The Bishop of Alexandria, so it was charged, had played the part of an agitator and traitor during the late political happenings. It was said that he was seen to have stirred up Constans against Constantius and was an accomplice of the usurper Magnentius. Thus despising the laws of the Church as well as those of the Empire, he had, so they said, celebrated the divine service upon imperial ground not yet consecrated and had thus committed an encroachment of lese-majesty as well as a sacrilegious profanation. But there was not the least truth in these charges. Certain views and certain deeds, altogether beyond blame, were altered and thus exploited: the relations of courtesy which Emperor Constans had with the Patriarch during these latter years; a deputation, unsuccessful though it was, which Magnentius sent to the Bishop of Alexandria, as to many other bishops, to beg his support; and the celebration of a liturgical function performed, in a case of urgency, in a church that had not yet been solemnly consecrated. But the Eusebians' emissaries were instructed to comment upon these events in such a manner as to ruin Athanasius in the mind of the Pope and of the Emperor.

If we may credit a letter contained in the works of St. Hilary, Liberius was at first tricked by the calumnies, summoned Athanasius to Rome, and, upon the latter's refusal to come, broke off communion with him and accepted that of the Easterners. But the best critics reject the genuineness of the letter. Moreover, the friends of Athanasius did not remain inactive. Eighty bishops sent the Pope a memorial in favor of the Bishop of Alexandria. It seems Liberius then held a council at Rome to hear the case, but the affair was of such great importance and had such widespread bearings in East and West that the Pope thought it well to settle it by a great council. He intended to have it meet at Aquileia and for this purpose asked the practically indispensable permission of the Emperor.

Beginning in October 353, Constantius had made his residence at Arles in Gaul. There it was he received the two papal legates: Marcellus, bishop of Campania, and Vincent, bishop of Capua. The latter is the one who, although only a priest then, had represented the Pope at Nicaea, along with Hosius.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia ad Constantium.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> This is the famous letter Studens pacis (P. L. X, 678 f.). On the apocryphal character of this letter, see Coustant, the scholarly editor of the works of St. Hilary, P. L., X, 679, and Hefele, II, 200 ff. Even were the letter authentic, as Duchesne and Feder are inclined to think, it does not furnish a proof of the supposed facts mentioned in it. For this letter, written several years after the event by the pope, or rather by one of his secretaries who was asking for the termination of the pope's exile, had as its purpose, as Duchesne remarks, to represent Liberius' recent rupture with Athanasius, as an old affair. (Duchesne, Libère et Fortunatien, in the Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire of the École française de Rome, 1908, p. 31.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> St. Hilary, Fragmentum V, no. 2, P. L., X, 683; St. Athanasius, Apologia ad Constantium, nos. 19 f.

Liberius' two envoys placed in the Emperor's hands the writings that Rome had received for and against Athanasius.<sup>7</sup>

# Council of Arles (353)

Constantius would have been glad to see Athanasius' case promptly decided by a council, but on condition that he have the council under his hand and be able to make it declare a severe condemnation against the Bishop of Alexandria. The choice of Arles as the meeting-place quite agreed with his wishes. He had just appointed as its bishop one of his creatures, Saturninus, a man of ordinary ability, but an ambitious flatterer. A partisan of Arianism under the preceding emperors, he had shown himself a zealous propagator of the heresy as soon as Constantius, when sole master of the Empire, openly manifested his heterodoxical tendencies. It was through Saturninus and a few of his friends that Arianism won part of the Provençal population. This court prelate later on, after disturbing the Church of Gaul by his machinations, was deposed in a council held at Paris in 361 and was declared unworthy of the title of bishop.8 In the Emperor's entourage were also two bishops, Ursacius of Singidunum 9 and Valens of Mursa, who would afterwards play an even sadder part.<sup>10</sup> Constantius told the papal legates he intended that the Council should meet in the city of Arles, not at Aquileia.

When the bishops were assembled, he offered them a decree all prepared and probably drawn up by Valens and Ursacius;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mansi, III, 200; St. Hilary, Fragmentum VI, nos. 2 f., P. L., X, 687 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Histoire générale du Languedoc, vol. I, bk. 3; Histoire littéraire de la France, vol. I.

<sup>9</sup> Now Belgrade.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> It was said that Valens, bishop of Mursa in Mysia, when Magnentius suffered his decisive defeat, had reported the event to Constantius as though he received it from an angel, and thus won the emperor's favor. (Sulpicius Severus, *History*, chap. 38.)

it was the condemnation of Athanasius. In vain Vincent and Marcellus, the Pope's legates, protested, declaring that the doctrinal questions should take precedence over questions of individuals and asking that at least, before decreeing the personal condemnation of Athanasius, they should condemn the doctrine of Arius. Constantius intervened in person and urged with threats, even with force, that the bishops sign the document submitted to them. They all yielded, including the papal legates—all except one bishop. This was Paulinus of Treves, whom the Emperor banished to Phrygia. There Paulinus died in 368 amidst all sorts of privations and sufferings. Pope Liberius was much afflicted by the defection of his legates, in particular by that of Bishop Vincent, and he wrote to Hosius, saying: "I am crushed by the excessive grief which this weakness causes me. Would that I might die for God so that I too might not be taken for a traitor and might not seem to approve doctrines which the Church condemns." 11

# Council of Milan (355)

The Pontiff, to free himself from blame, addressed several bishops of the West to the same purpose. He did more; he sent to Constantius another delegation, commissioned to deliver a plain-spoken and dignified letter to the Emperor <sup>12</sup> and to ask that he assemble a new council. But it was soon evident that the Emperor's prompt acquiescence to the Pope's proposal concealed a desire to make his own sovereign will triumph again in a larger council.

At Milan the scenes of violence were still more outrageous than at Arles. Ursacius and Valens spoke as masters in the

<sup>11</sup> St. Hilary, Fragmentum VI, no. 3, P. L., X, 688; Mansi, III, 201.

<sup>12</sup> This important letter will be found in Hefele-Leclercq, Histoire des conciles. I, 871 f., note.

Council. Valens, when Dionysius of Milan was about to sign the Nicene symbol, rushed to his side and, snatching the pen from him, said: "That will not be done." After Lucifer of Cagliari declared that all the soldiers of the Empire would not make him sign an impious decree, and after the orthodox bishops had announced they would do nothing against the canons of the Church, Constantius said to them: "My will is the canon." This was a crude declaration of the Caesaro-papal thesis. He added that he put himself forward as the accuser of Athanasius. The orthodox bishops courageously replied: "How can you, who did not witness the incidents which form the grounds of the complaint, be his accuser, he being himself absent?"

But, as at Arles, threats and violence finally received the votes of the majority. Dionysius of Milan, Lucifer of Cagliari, Eusebius of Vercelli, and the two other Roman envoys were the only ones that did not yield. They were at once loaded with chains and banished to different far-off regions. Seeing them pass, in chains like criminals, people generally showed them much sympathy and, in several places, did not conceal their hatred for a sect which thus treated the ministers of Christ. They were also comforted by a touching letter from Pope Liberius.<sup>13</sup>

The persecutions did not cease with the Council. For the purpose of making the lower clergy and the faithful consent to communion with the Arians, in most cities the municipal officials, acting under imperial orders, repeated the scenes of violence that had taken place at Milan. Many weakened. And yet, as Athanasius remarks, the people were not Arian. On the contrary, he says, "all avoid the antichristian heresy as they would a serpent." <sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Idem, I, 876.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, no. 41 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., IV, 284).

### Courage of Pope Liberius

Three men, however, still remained firm and free in the tyrant's presence: Pope Liberius, the venerable Hosius, then almost a hundred years old, and Athanasius. Constantius determined to make them bend before him or crush them.

First he addressed the Pope. He sent one of his closest intimates, the eunuch Eusebius, with orders to make the Pope condemn Athanasius and hold communion with the Arians. Liberius declined to obey either command. The eunuch insisted, offered gold, which was indignantly refused, and brought this gold into St. Peter's Church. The Pope forbade the treasurer of the basilica to accept the offering. Eusebius flew into a rage and set out for Milan after uttering direful threats.

Shortly after this, Liberius was seized at night and brought to the imperial court under heavy guard. Theodoret has left us a sketch of the dialogue that took place between the Pope and the Emperor.

Constantius: "We have judged it right, as you are a Christian and the bishop of our city, to send for you in order to admonish you to abjure all connection with the folly and wickedness of Athanasius. For it was in this light that his conduct was viewed by the whole world, when he was separated from the communion of the Church by the synod."

Liberius: "O Emperor, ecclesiastical sentences ought to be enacted with justice: therefore, if it be pleasing to your piety, order the judges to assemble; and if it be seen that Athanasius deserves condemnation, then let sentence be passed upon him according to ecclesiastical forms. No man ought to be condemned without being examined."

Constantius: "The whole universe has condemned him."

Liberius: "Those who signed the condemnation were not eyewitnesses of anything that occurred; but were actuated by the desire of glory, and by the fear of ignominy."

Epictetus the Bishop: "O Emperor, it is not on behalf of the faith, nor in defense of the ecclesiastical judgments, that Liberius is pleading; but merely in order that he may boast before the Roman senators of having, by his arguments, turned the Emperor from his purpose."

The Emperor (addressing Liberius): "What portion do you constitute of the universe, that you desire to destroy the peace of the whole world in order to defend one solitary wicked individual?"

Liberius: "If I were standing alone, the cause of truth would not be less important. There was once a period when only three persons could be found sufficiently courageous to resist the royal mandate." <sup>15</sup>

Liberius remained firm. He was granted three days in which to decide. This delay he declined, as also the pecuniary help which the Emperor, the Empress, and the eunuch Eusebius offered. The Emperor, hoping that Liberius' firmness would be overcome by exile, privations, and separation from all his friends, had him brought to the city of Beroea in Thrace, far from all his friends and from his companions in misfortune, and confided him there to one of the leaders of the Arian party, Bishop Demophilus. Then he gave orders to put the deacon Felix in Liberius' place in the pontifical see. 16

### Banishment of Bishop Hosius

Hosius, bishop of Cordova, so they thought, would be more easily persuaded. His great age, the important events in which he had participated, the wounds he had received for the faith, gave him a considerable influence in the Christian world. He was called "the prince of the councils," "the father of the Nicene symbol." Constantius sent for him and, by countless means, tried to seduce him. After listening to the Emperor, the venerable Bishop spoke. Not only did he refuse to make

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Theodoret, bk. 2, chap. 13 (alias 16). Sozomen, IV, 11, had at his hand the official report of this interview.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, chap. 75; Sozomen, IV, 11.

any concession, but he sharply rebuked the sovereign for his conduct. He spoke with such impressive authority that Constantius was deeply moved and allowed him to return to Spain.

Later the Arians, dissatisfied with this solution, were insistent in their urging of the Emperor. The latter wrote Hosius several letters, in the hope of persuading him to condemn the Bishop of Alexandria. The aged Bishop of Cordova finally replied to the Emperor. His letter begins as follows:

"Hosius to Constantius the Emperor sends health in the Lord. I was a confessor at the first, when a persecution arose in the time of your grandfather Maximian; and if you shall persecute me, I am ready now, too, to endure anything rather than to betray the truth. Cease to write thus; adopt not the cause of Arius, nor listen to those in the East. . . . Cease these proceedings, I beseech you, and remember that you are a mortal man. Be afraid of the day of judgment. . . . Intrude not yourself into ecclesiastical matters. God has put into your hands the kingdom; to us He has entrusted the affairs of His Church. It is written, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.'" <sup>17</sup>

Constantius had Hosius brought to Sirmium and kept him there in exile, subjecting him to all kinds of ill treatment.<sup>18</sup>

### St. Athanasius in Egypt

Athanasius remained to be dealt with. To subdue him by threats or promises seemed impossible. To seize him by force appeared no less hopeless. His popularity was immense. The feeling aroused by his arrest would be the greater since, as everybody knew, Constantius had solemnly agreed never to desert him. Athanasius would leave Alexandria only of his own accord or through the wish of his friends. Therefore one or other of these expedients must be resorted to. Early in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> St. Athanasius, op. cit., chap. 44. Leclercq (L'Espagne chrétienne, pp. 112-116) gives us Hosius' letter complete.

<sup>18</sup> Leclercq, op. cit., p. 116.

February, 356, an uprising was provoked in Alexandria. During the night of February 8, five thousand men, led by Duke Syrianus, who was devoted to the Arians, surrounded the Church of Theonas, where the Bishop was celebrating one of those night offices called vigils. Some people recruited from the dregs of the population, mingling with the soldiers, suddenly burst into the church. Several of the faithful were killed, many were wounded. Athanasius, sitting on his episcopal throne, refused to leave. But the people, driven back by the bandits, urged him. With great difficulty his friends extricated him and brought him, half-stifled, beyond the church precincts and thence outside the city. There he was kept hidden. The Emperor's purpose was attained. It was now possible to say that Athanasius had fled and to dispose of his see in favor of an Arian.<sup>19</sup>

A certain George of Cappadocia was installed in his place. He was a coarse, brutal fellow. At the feast of Easter 357 he entered one of the churches at the head of a body of soldiers, as one enters a citadel. For all Athanasius' friends in Alexandria there was a reign of terror during a period of eighteen months.

For some time it was not known what had become of Athanasius. He remained in hiding near Alexandria for a few days; then he went to the desert places of Upper Egypt. The monks welcomed as a father him whom St. Pachomius had so highly honored, to whom the dying St. Antony had bequeathed his tunic. Continually in flight, continually pursued, but always protected by the silent and unfailing loyalty of his hosts, many of whom suffered martyrdom rather than betray him, 20 he wandered from one desert place to another during all the rest of Constantius' reign, that is, for six years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See the account of this scene, written by St. Athanasius, in Leclercq, *Les Martyrs*, III, 48-57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Acta sanctorum, May, III, 330. Cf. Annales du Musée Guimet, XVII, 679 f.

More than once his enemies almost caught him. The devotedness of his friends, his own wonderful coolness, and a special protection of Providence rescued him from every danger. One evening, as he was going up the Nile in a little boat, he heard the sound of oars behind him. It was a galley of the imperial police force. Someone called out to him: "Have you seen Athanasius?" "I think so," he answered, disguising his voice; "he is ahead of you, row fast." The galley passed him, and he himself reached his place of retreat.

The holy Bishop gladly shared the life of the cenobites and hermits. Frequently invited to address them, he sometimes preached to them about love of the interior life and of study or he narrated his struggles against the Arians, or related some details from the life of their holy patriarch Antony whom he knew so well and loved so much. His picturesque History of the Arians and his simple, moving Life of St. Antony still preserve the flavor of the talks in which he sketched these two works. Other books also he wrote in the desert: the Apology for his Flight, the Letters to Serapion, the Letter on the Death of Arius, the Letters to the Monks. and the book *On the Synods*, in which he made advances to the moderate portion of his adversaries. Especially noteworthy is the Apology to Emperor Constantius in which, after adducing many arguments, facts and probabilities which belied the calumnies uttered against him, without complaining of his exile and sufferings he begs God to enlighten the Emperor's mind. We may form some notion of the spirit of this writing by the following passage in which he denies that he had corresponded with the usurper Magnentius: "You blame me for having written to that infernal Magnentius. Christ is my witness that I do not know him. And how could I have started a letter to that man? By saying: 'You have done well to kill him who heaped honors upon me'? or: 'I love you for butchering those at Rome who were so devoted to me'?"

# St. Hilary

St. Athanasius' voice was not the only one heard by the Emperor to remind him of his duties toward the Church. In 355, at the worst period of the persecution, when Constantius had banished Liberius and Hosius and was planning to rid himself of Athanasius, an eloquent protest reached him from the West, in its form not so spirited as that of the Bishop of Alexandria, but equally strong and urgent. "Blessed Augustus," it said, "I implore you, not with words, but with tears, that you no longer permit the Catholic Church to be outraged. . . . It is not right that anyone should forcibly constrain men to submit to masters who everywhere sow the impure germs of adulterous doctrine. Bishops are imprisoned, the faithful enchained, virgins outraged. . . . From your Piety we especially ask that these eminent confessors, these bishops, who have been sent into exile or who have sought refuge in the desert, may resume their sees and that in this way liberty and joy may again reign everywhere." Then follows a eulogy of the chief victims of the persecution: Paulinus of Treves, Dionysius of Milan, Lucifer of Cagliari, Eusebius of Vercelli, and Athanasius of Alexandria.<sup>21</sup>

The author of the courageous petition was a young bishop whom the choice of the people and clergy had just put at the head of the diocese of Poitiers. This champion of the faith, who would be called the "Rhone of Latin eloquence" and "the Athanasius of the West," was born between 310 and 320 <sup>22</sup> in a small town of Gaul. His name was Hilary. He was descended from a noble family that educated him in the culture of ancient letters and the practices of idolatry. But one day the young patrician felt rising in his conscience a dread ques-

<sup>21</sup> St. Hilary, Ad Constantium, I, 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Largent, Saint Hilaire, p. 1. St. Hilary must have been born in the vicinity of Poitiers.

tion: What is the purpose of life? In his book *De Trinitate*, he himself relates the inner drama that led him to the Christian faith.

"It is unworthy of humanity," he writes, "to hold that this life was granted without the power of progress towards immortality; a life, indeed, which then we should confidently assert did not deserve to be regarded as a gift of God. . . . My soul was inflamed with a passionate desire to apprehend God or to know Him." <sup>23</sup>

But where was he to find authoritative teaching about God? The young pagan consulted the teachings of paganism. "Some," he says, "speak of numerous families of gods. Others make a distinction between the great gods and the lesser gods. Most of them, while affirming the existence of a Divinity, declare it not concerned with human affairs or merely adore that nature which is revealed in the motion and chance of atoms. . . But my soul regarded as certain that the eternal, divine Being is necessarily simple and unique and that He has no principle or element outside of Himself." <sup>24</sup>

"While I was considering these things within myself, my eyes fell upon books which the religion of the Hebrews hold to be writings of Moses and the prophets."

Hilary then relates how he found in these books the answer he was waiting for, how one after another were revealed to him the various attributes of the Divinity; His absolute unity, His eternity, His infinity, His supreme beauty, and His inexhaustible goodness.

Hilary's soul was not yet fully satisfied. The problem of God had its solution, but that of man's destiny and his relations with God was not yet answered. The reading of St. John's Gospel solved it for the young patrician, and did so in the very first lines of the sacred Book: "In the beginning

<sup>28</sup> St. Hilary, On the Trinity, I, 1 f.

<sup>24</sup> St. Hilary, Ad Constantium, I, 4.

was the Word, and the Word was with God. . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." "Upon reading these lines," says Hilary, "my mind went beyond its own limits and grasped more than it dared hope about God. It learned that its Creator is God of God, that the Word is God from the beginning. It recognized that the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and that His glory was seen, full of grace and truth." <sup>25</sup> Hilary had found the full truth. He did not yet know the Arian heresy. But already he was in possession of the principles that would serve him for its refutation.

As to the exact date of Hilary's baptism or of his elevation to the bishopric of Poitiers, we are left to conjecture. According to his own testimony, in 355 he had been bishop for some time. We know also, on his own authority, that when the acclaim of the people and clergy called him to the bishopric, he was married. The law of continency was at that time rigorously imposed upon the clergy. "Hilary's wife, giving an example that has found many an emulator, resolved never more to look upon her husband except when he was at the altar, transfigured in the flame of the sacrifice, and henceforth to love him only as a daughter or sister." <sup>27</sup>

The new bishop's first care was to give his people a solid knowledge of the Christian faith. His first work, a Commentary on Matthew, composed about 355,<sup>28</sup> contains his instructions preached at the beginning of his episcopate.<sup>29</sup> Soon the echo of the Arian disputes reached Poitiers. The Council of

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., I, 10.

<sup>26</sup> St. Hilary, De Synodis, no. 91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Largent, Saint Hilaire, p. 19. See St. Hilary's charming letter to his daughter Abra, on pp. 55-59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Bardenhewer, *Patrology*, p. 407.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Hilary initiated the science of exegesis in the West. The only commentators we know of before him are Victorinus of Pettau, Reticius bishop of Autun, and Fortunatian bishop of Aquileia. Of the writings of Victorinus we have nothing but St. Jerome's revision of his commentary on the Apocalypse. Reticius' and Fortunatian's commentaries are totally lost. St. Jerome read them; and he says he was not satisfied with them.

Arles, which condemned St. Athanasius in 355, and the activities of Bishop Saturninus of Arles, who wanted to follow up the success obtained by the Arian party and to force the error upon the whole Church of Gaul, aroused Hilary's zeal for the orthodox faith. The violent deeds of these heretics, no less than their doctrine, made Hilary indignant. He convoked an assembly of Gallic bishops and persuaded them to withdraw from the communion of the Arians. Then he wrote to Emperor Constantius the courageous letter we have mentioned.

Saturninus answered this excommunication by denouncing Hilary to the Emperor as a dangerous agitator; then, in agreement with Ursacius and Valens, he assembled a council at Beziers early in 356. Hilary and the orthodox bishops attended and there endeavored to defend the cause of Athanasius. But Saturninus and his friends would not listen to anything on this point. Says St. Hilary: "Those people would have tried to deceive Christ Himself." 30 The division of the Gallic episcopate into two parties continued. Soon afterwards Saturninus rejoiced at the publication of a decree by Constantius banishing Hilary of Poitiers and Rhodanius of Toulouse to Phrygia. Rhodanius died soon after reaching his place of exile. Hilary remained in banishment three years. During that period he matured his theological ideas, wrote his great work *On the Trinity*, and composed his first hymns. The original title of his work on the Trinity was Concerning the Faith, against the Arians. It was written between 356 and 359. Says Bardenhewer:

"The entire work is a sustained and intensely enthusiastic plea for the faith of the Church. In the domain of early ecclesiastical literature it is certainly the most imposing of all the works written

<sup>30</sup> St. Hilary, Contra Constantium, no. 2. On the Council of Beziers, see Douais, L'Église des Gaules et le conciliabule de Béziers.

against Arianism. He bases his arguments on the speculative thought of the Greek Fathers, but he does not, therefore, cease to be a writer of independence and originality. . . . His diction is always pithy and dignified. . . . It is true that the average reader of Hilary finds his language difficult, but this, however, is to be attributed not to obscurity of style, but to the depth and boldness of the ideas he is expressing." <sup>31</sup>

Hilary was a poet as well as a philosopher. In Phrygia, when listening to the singing of the Greek hymns, he was prompted to write his first lyrical compositions. Three recently discovered poetical works of Hilary <sup>32</sup> give us an idea of the measured elegance of his poetry. The following are a few strophes of his *Morning Hymn*:

"O Thou who art the morning star, Not that whose paltry, feeble ray Announces dawn's approach;

O Thou, more brilliant than the sun, Thou light supreme, unclouded day, Illumine all my soul.

Creator, beam of Father's light, Our hearts inflood and penetrate, With grace and holiness."

The Evening Hymn begins as follows:

"My eyes which heavy faults weigh down, Unworthy I to raise aloft And gaze upon the stars.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 405.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> They were published in 1887 by Gamurrini, S. Hilarii Tractatus de mysteriis et hymni.

O Christ, Thy tender pity show, Thy gracious mercy now bestow On souls by Thee redeemed.

Required good I've left undone, And evil deeds I've oft performed. O Christ, be Thou my aid."

Then follows this anathema of heresy:

"I curse the blasphemies, that spoke Sabellius and Arius. These Simons I heed not."

From the depth of exile, the voices of Hilary and Athanasius were still heard refuting and denouncing Arius. But, among the bishops still in office, none any longer dared echo these refutations and anathemas. Terror had spread through the whole Empire. Saturninus, Ursacius, and Valens in the West, Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste, and George of Laodicea in the East, exercised a sort of insolent and annoying police surveillance over their fellow-bishops. Every prelate suspected of loyalty to the homoousios formula or of sympathy toward Athanasius, was denounced as guilty of Sabellianism and of treason to the Empire. Each denunciation was followed by prompt and terrible penalties. Striking examples of this were seen in the banishment of Pope Liberius, Paulinus of Treves, Athanasius, and many others. To all human seeming, the cause of orthodoxy was lost.

### Disagreements among the Arians

Yet the victory of Arianism, in proportion as it appeared more assured, revealed deep splits among the heterodox. According as the bonds created and maintained by a common campaign became relaxed, the diversity of tendencies and doctrines appeared among the enemies of Athanasius and Hilary. At first, in their ranks, were found out-and-out Arians, who denied none of the heresiarch's theories, but who were forced by circumstances to dissimulate their views. They reappeared with the logic of their heretical deductions, having at their head Aetius and Eunomius. Aetius was a former goldsmith or blacksmith. Having been caught in the flagrant theft of some valuable article and being obliged to quit his trade, he entered upon the study of medicine and Aristotle's philosophy. Finding that he possessed remarkable qualities as a dialectician, he used them to push Arius' most extreme ideas to their logical consequence. He openly opposed the leaders of the Eusebian party, Basil of Ancyra and Eustathius of Sebaste. Meanwhile he won the confidence of Caesar Gallus and became the catechist of Gallus' young brother Julian, the future Apostate.

Aetius was only a deacon. But soon his doctrines assumed considerable importance in the Church through the elevation of one of his disciples, Eunomius, to the episcopal see of Cyzicus in Mysia. Eunomius, in his youth, had tried various careers and decided upon the ecclesiastical state only after his first dealings with Aetius in 356. So great did his influence presently become that people began giving the name "Eunomians" to those who professed rigid Arianism and who previously were called "Aetians." They were also known as "Anomoeans" because they taught that the Son is unlike (ἀνόμοιος) God, "Heterousians" because they held that He is of another substance (ἐτέρας οὐσίας), and "Excocontians" because they held that He was drawn from nothing (ἐξ οὖκ ὄντων). Fundamentally the Anomoeans would not admit any generation in God because they conceived Him in a purely abstract manner, as indivisibly one and absolutely simple, almost in

the same way as the eighteenth century philosophers conceive the Supreme Being.<sup>33</sup>

The semi-Arians recognized Basil of Ancyra, Marcellus' successor, as their leader. They were also called Eusebians because their party was connected, in origin, with Eusebius of Nicomedia. The name "Homeousians" or "Homoiousiasts" was likewise given them because they wished to substitute for homoousios (consubstantial) of the Nicene Council the word homoiousios, almost identical with the other word, but not indicating with the same exactness the nature of the relations between the Father and the Son. Although their system was not so far removed from orthodox doctrine, yet, because of their intrigues, their ambiguous formulas, and the favor they enjoyed at court, they were not less to be dreaded than the Anomoeans.

Closer to orthodoxy, and also called Eusebians, were men heartily devoted to the symbol of Nicaea, but persuaded that the word homoousios (consubstantial) was dangerous, as favoring Sabellianism. The affair of Marcellus of Ancyra, the condemnation of Photinus, and the lack of exactness in the words ousia and hypostasis (substance and person) at that time, seemed to confirm those assertions. Lastly, some people who were deceived by the calumnies about Athanasius, and some people accustomed to take their stand, without investigation, on the side of the government, made up a considerable remainder of the party that claimed connection with Eusebius and the Emperor. But these latter could not be counted on very solidly. When the Eusebians and the Anomoeans were battling each other, most of those who adhered to the sect only through misunderstandings, withdrew from it and swelled the ranks of the orthodox.

<sup>88</sup> Hefele, II, 210 ff.

#### The Anomoean Creed

The first manifestation of the rigid Arians was the profession of faith known as the second formula of Sirmium. It was drawn up by an assembly of exclusively Western bishops during Emperor Constantius' sojourn at Sirmium in 357. It rejected the homoousios of the Nicene Creed and the homoiousios of the semi-Arians. It declared that the Father is greater than the Son, that the Son is subject to Him in all things, and that the Holy Ghost exists only through the Son. From his exile Hilary called this formula simply blasphemy. As to Hosius, now almost a hundred years old, whom the Emperor still kept in exile at the court, advantage was taken of his weakened mind and will 34 to make him sign the new symbol. The former president of the Councils of Nicaea and Sardica yielded, it was said, to the brutalities exercised upon him by Constantius himself. It was an easy victory and not a very glorious one. Shortly afterwards the Bishop of Cordova, feeling the approach of death, publicly anathematized Arius and protested against the violence to which he himself had been subjected.35

## Council of Ancyra (358)

The semi-Arians, however, not wishing to remain under the odium of the condemnation pronounced against them by the Council of Sirmium, decided at the suggestion of one of their number, George of Laodicea, to meet in council. The gathering, made up exclusively of Eastern bishops, took place in the city of Ancyra, on Easter 358, under the presidency of Basil of Ancyra, the most notable personage and most learned the-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Hosius did not take part in the last councils. He was present neither at Arles in 353 nor at Milan in 355. Probably his poor health prevented his coming.

<sup>35</sup> Leclercq, L'Espagne chrétienne, p. 130.

ologian of the party. It issued several anathemas against the Anomoean doctrines. Then it sent a delegation to the Emperor, still in residence at Sirmium, and obtained from him the summoning of another council to be held in Sirmium.

## Council of Sirmium (358)

The council took place in the summer of 358 and adopted a declaration known as the third Sirmium formulary. This new profession of faith, directed against the Anomoeans, contained in its phrases nothing unorthodox, but, in defining the relations between the Father and the Son, it did not use the word *homoousios*. This council and its formulary would not require our attention except for the fact that the historian Sozomen mentions in connection with it an incident which history cannot pass over in silence. According to Sozomen, "who seems to have had first-hand and official documents on the matter," <sup>36</sup> a stranger arrived at the Council, which was almost exclusively composed of the bishops surrounding the Emperor. <sup>37</sup> This stranger's presence at once gave the synod a special importance. It was Pope Liberius, the exile of Beroea.

# Question of Pope Liberius

Constantius had just terminated Liberius' banishment and requested him to take part in the Council of Sirmium. Perhaps it was convoked only on his account. They began by asking him—we are still following Sozomen's account—to condemn the doctrine of the homoousios (i. e., the consubstantiality of the Word). The aged pontiff refused to do so. Then Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste, and Eleusios of Cyzicus

<sup>36</sup> Duchesne, Liber pontificalis, I, 209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> The court of Sirmium seems to have been constantly encumbered by numerous bishops.

explained that the word *homoousios* was very dangerous, that it had been used by Paul of Samosata and by Photinus to spread their errors, and that two Councils of Antioch had rejected it. The Pope yielded to these arguments and signed the formulary. Yet he thought it necessary to declare that "those who affirm that the Son is not like unto the Father in substance and in all other respects, are excommunicated." <sup>38</sup>

In the very words of the historian who is the most explicit on this subject, such is the famous incident of "the fall of Pope Liberius" at the third Council of Sirmium. The simple narrative of the events amply demonstrates that the old pontiff, by affixing his signature, through ignorance or fear, to a formulary drawn up by semi-Arians, did not abandon a particle of the orthodox faith. Still less could we say that he purposed setting forth an *ex cathedra* definition of faith. But was not this event preceded by a defection at Beroea? That is another question, and one far less clear.

St. Athanasius, in his *History of the Arians*, written for the monks of Egypt, declares that "Liberius, after he had been in banishment two years, gave way and from fear of threatened death, subscribed." <sup>39</sup> St. Hilary writes, in his *Contra Constantium*: "You have carried the war even to Rome, you have snatched away its bishop, and I know not whether you were not more impious in sending him back than in banishing him." <sup>40</sup> In the *Historical Fragments* of St. Hilary, which are probably merely the remains of a vast work on the history of the Councils of Rimini and Seleucia, <sup>41</sup> are found still more significant evidences. <sup>42</sup> From these documents we may conclude that Liberius, worn out by his exile and circumvented by the Arian Bishop Demophilus, obtained his freedom and

<sup>38</sup> Sozomen, IV, 15.

<sup>39</sup> St. Athanasius, History of the Arians, no. 41.

<sup>40</sup> St. Hilary, Contra Constantium, no. 11.

<sup>41</sup> Wilmart, in the Revue bénédictine, April and July, 1907.

<sup>42</sup> St. Hilary, Fragmenta, P. L., X, 678-681, 683-695.

his return to Rome by promising to separate from Athanasius and hold communion with the semi-Arians.

Bossuet, along with Fleury and Tillemont, credited the importance of all this evidence. But he did not tremble for the honor of the Roman Church. In his Second Pastoral Instruction on the Promises of the Church, he writes: "What shall we say of the fall of Liberius? Did the Church preserve her succession when a pope rejected the communion of Athanasius, entered into communion with the Arians, and subscribed to a confession of faith in which the Nicene faith was suppressed? Can you believe that the succession of the Church was interrupted by the fall of one pope, when we are certain of the fact that he yielded only to open force and that of his own accord he returned to his duty? Every act extorted by violence is null. Moreover, it is certain that this pope, after straying for a few months, returned to his first dispositions and completed his pontificate, which was a long one, in communion with a St. Athanasius, a St. Basil, and the others of like merit and repute. We know he is praised by St. Epiphanius and by St. Ambrose, who twice calls him 'Pope Liberius of holy memory." "43

Since Bossuet's time the documents on which Tillemont and Fleury depended have been critically reviewed. Hefele does not accept the authenticity of the fragments attributed to St. Hilary. This view is held by recent critics, who even see Arian interpolations in the testimony of St. Athanasius and other writers we have just cited. It seems to them that Constantius, in recalling Liberius from exile, was merely yielding to the demands of the Roman population, as Sozomen relates.<sup>44</sup> The enthusiastic welcome given the Pope on his return

<sup>43</sup> Bossuet, Seconde instruction pastorale sur les promesses de l'Église (Lachat ed., XVII, 217 f.). The Pope's temporary weakness or mistake was like that of Pope Pius VII at Fontainebleau.

<sup>44</sup> Sozomen, IV, 15.

from exile, according to Socrates, corroborates this view. Would such a gala reception have been accorded a pope who owed his liberation to a doctrinal defection? In a word, the learned editor of the *Liber pontificalis*, although holding to the pope's defection at Beroea, acknowledges that the contrary opinion "may be defended." <sup>46</sup> This defection "is not proved by unanswerable arguments." <sup>47</sup>

## Antipope Felix

After the conclusion of the Council of Sirmium,

"Constantius permitted Liberius to return to Rome. The bishops who were then convened at Sirmium wrote to Felix who governed the Roman Church, and to the Roman clergy, desiring them to receive Liberius; they directed that Felix and Liberius should share the apostolic throne and be associated together without dissension in the discharge of the ministerial functions, and that whatever illegalities might have occured in the ordination of the one or the banishment of the other, might be buried in oblivion. The people of Rome regarded Liberius as a good man and esteemed him highly on account of the courage he had evinced in opposing the Emperor, 48 so that they had even excited seditions on his account." 49 Theodoret supplies the following detail: "The edict of the Emperor was read

<sup>45</sup> Socrates, II, 37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Duchesne, Libère et Fortunatien, in the Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire, published by the École française de Rome, 1908, p. 64.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Jacques Zeiller, La Question du pape Libère, in the Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétienne, January 15, 1913, p. 51. Saltet (Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique, 1905, pp. 222 ff., 279 ff.), Fedele Savio, S. J. (La Questione del papa Liberio), and Chapman (Revue bénédictine, January, April, July, 1910) maintain that Liberius was free from any fall at Beroea and from desertion of Athanasius. The contrary view is held by Duchesne (op. cit.), Wilmart (Revue bénédictine, 1908, p. 360), and Feder, S.J., in his work preparatory to the Fragmenta of St. Hilary, published in the Vienna Corpus. Cf. Savio, Novi studii sulla questione del papa Liberio, and Punti controversi nella questione del papa Liberio.

 $<sup>^{48}</sup>$  Καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν τὸν Λυβέριον καὶ ἀνδρείως ὑπὲρ τοῦ δόγματος ἀντειπόντα τῷ βασιλεῖ. P. G., LXVII, 1152.

<sup>49</sup> Sozomen, IV, 15.

in the race-course, and the multitude shouted, that the imperial regulation was just, that the spectators were divided into two factions, each deriving its name from its own color, and that each faction would now have its own bishop. After having thus ridiculed the edict of the Emperor, they all exclaimed with one voice: 'There is but one God, one Christ, one bishop.'" <sup>50</sup> Sozomen relates that "Felix survived but a short time; and Liberius found himself in sole possession of the Church. This event was, no doubt, ordained by God, that the seat of Peter might not be dishonored by the occupancy of two bishops; for such an arrangement, being contrary to ecclesiastical law, would certainly have been a source of discord." <sup>51</sup>

Although the semi-Arians could not boast of winning the pope, yet they had won a real victory over the Anomoeans, or rigid Arians. And they eagerly took advantage of it. Basil of Ancyra, making use of his influence with certain women of rank at court, had rigorous measures adopted. The principal leaders of the Anomoean party, Aetius and Eunomius, were sent to Phrygia; seventy of their followers were exiled. Following these events, several of those who professed radical Arianism abandoned it and joined the ranks of the semi-Arians. Of this number was Macedonius, the bishop of Constantinople, who later became the head of the sect bearing his name.<sup>52</sup>

Most of these rigorous steps were taken without the Emperor's knowledge. He did not approve of them. Such spirited disputes were bound to disturb the tranquillity of the Empire. He recalled the exiles and decided to convene the bishops of the different parties in a council, hoping thereby, if not to accomplish a complete union, at least to put down the quarrels. He was contemplating a second Council of Nicaea. But a trick of Basil of Ancyra, who persuaded Constantius to assemble the bishops in two separate councils, brought about greater

<sup>50</sup> Theodoret, II, 14 (alias 17).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Sozomen, IV, 15.

<sup>52</sup> Philostorgius, Ecclesiastical History, IV, 8 f.

disunion out of this project which had been planned with a view to conciliation.

## Symbol of Sirmium

However, the Anomoeans at the imperial court, rightly fearing that the semi-Arians were preparing to have their doctrines condemned, promptly proposed to the bishops, before leaving the capital, a symbol of faith with a double meaning. This was the fourth Formula of Sirmium. One of their ablest leaders, Marcus of Arethusa, wrote it out during the night of May 21, 359. The chief passage in the new symbol is the following: "We believe that the Son is like the Father in all things, following the Scriptures." By the phrase "in all things" ( $\kappa a \tau a \pi a \nu \tau a$ ), did they mean a likeness of all the faculties, according to the Anomoean doctrine, or a likeness of the substance itself, the *homoiousios* of the semi-Arians? Therein was the equivocation. Basil submitted it and then prepared his arguments to contest the interpretation of his adversaries. 54

While Anomoeans and semi-Arians were tearing each other to pieces, voices were heard in behalf of peace. They came from the orthodox. They came from places of banishment. From the deserts of Upper Egypt, Athanasius wrote:

"Those who accept everything else that was defined at Nicaea and doubt only about the *homoousios*, must not be treated as enemies.

. . We discuss the matter with them as brothers with brothers." <sup>55</sup> From his place of banishment in Phrygia, the Bishop of Poitiers echoed the sentiments of the Patriarch of Alexandria. He said: "The word *homoousios* can be understood in a wrong sense. Let us prove that it can be understood in a very good sense." <sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> This symbol has been called the "dated creed."

<sup>54</sup> St. Epiphanius, Haereses, LXXXII, 12-22.

<sup>55</sup> St. Athanasius, De Synodis, no. 41.

<sup>56</sup> St. Hilary, De Synodis, no. 88.

But the Emperor, circumvented by Basil of Ancyra, decided to convene the two councils at the same time: one at Rimini in Italy, for the Westerners, the other at Seleucia in Isauria, for the Easterners. Basil's strategy was especially directed against the Anomoeans, whose forces would thus be divided. Its effects, however, were to emphasize still more the break between the orthodox, who were a majority in the West, and the semi-Arians, nearly all of them in the East.

# Council of Rimini (359)

The Council of Rimini met in the summer of 350. Pope Liberius did not go to it in person, nor was he represented at it. It is doubtful whether he was even invited. 57 Valens presented to it the famous Formula of Sirmium which was signed by Liberius, but without the reservation which the Pope had added. The majority of the Council declared the Nicene symbol sufficient and maintained the word "consubstantial." as alone affirming without circumlocution the absolute divinity of Christ. The dissenting members then withdrew and held a meeting by themselves. Constantius, impatient at these long delays, constrained the bishops by violence and trickery to sign a symbol that was almost a verbatim copy of the third Formula of Sirmium. Twenty of the bishops, out of more than four hundred, resisted to the very end and gave their signatures only upon making certain additions which condemned Arianism. "The bishops went away, each party ascribing the victory to itself: the Arian party, on account of the symbol; the orthodoxy party, on account of the additions." 58

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Ceillier, Histoire des auteurs sacrés, V, 520.

<sup>58</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 57.

## Council of Seleucia (359)

At Seleucia, whither Hilary had gone, not hesitating to enter into communion with the semi-Arians, the discussions began about the middle of September. The most remarkable incident of the gathering was the intervention of the followers of Acacius the One-eyed, bishop of Caesarea. 59 They formed a sect under the name of Acacians. They separated from the orthodox by rejecting the word homoousios (consubstantial); from the semi-Arians, by rejecting the word homoiousios (similar in substance); and from the Anomoeans, by rejecting the word anomoios (unlike). They held to the term omoios (like), whence their name of Omoeans. And they declared that by this word they meant a likeness of will, not of substance. In other words, in their opinion, to say that Christ was God, is the same as saying that His will was completely in conformity and adapted to the will of God. Thus they formed a middle party between the strict Arians and the semi-Arians. And this third party, by force of intrigues, was finally victorious.

The situation became more and more complicated. The Emperor was more vexed than ever. His wrath was increased by the appearance of two violent writings, published in 359 or 360. They were entitled *De non consentiendo cum haereticis* and *De regibus apostaticis*. The former maintained that Catholics ought to shun dealings with members of the Arian sect; the other predicted for Constantius the lot of the impious and idolatrous kings of Israel. Both of them were written by a bishop of Sardinia, Lucifer of Cagliari, an impetuous orthodox bishop. At the Council of Milan he was one of the most fearless opponents of the Arians. A spirited orator and tireless polemist, he was successively banished to Cappadocia, Comagenia, Celesyria, Palestine, and lastly to Egypt. But

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> See Le Bachelet, art. "Acace." in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 291.

threats, imprisonment, violence, all were of no avail to overcome his determination in fighting heresy. He had vowed implacable hatred for the Arians and all their abettors or protectors. The moderation of Athanasius and Hilary seemed to him a weakness. Later on, when the Pope decided to reconcile the repentant Arians and leave them in office, Lucifer separated from the Church with great pomp and founded the sect of Luciferians.

The Emperor decided to obtain religious unity at any cost. By use of pressure, he made the bishops, both of the East and of the West, subscribe to one symbol, ambiguously worded. Since it was signed by the Western bishops at Nice or Nike in Thrace, it became known as the symbol of Nike. Only Pope Liberius and a few others refused to subscribe. It was in connection with this fact that St. Jerome wrote: "At that moment the term *Usia* was abolished: the Nicene Faith stood condemned by acclamation. The whole world groaned, and was astonished to find itself Arian." 60

## Council of Constantinople

The Acacians, who were the real victors, eagerly profited by their success. On the occasion of the dedication of a church in Constantinople, they convened a synod at which seventy-two bishops were present. At the side of Acacius and his lieutenants was the celebrated Ulfilas, who had introduced Arianism into the nation of the Goths. The Council solemnly confirmed the symbol of Nike in a slightly altered form. Then the Acacians disposed of the Anomoeans and the semi-Arians. First they obtained from the Emperor the exile of Aetius, the leader of the Anomoeans. Next they had the leaders of

<sup>\*\*</sup>O"Tunc usiae nomen abolitum est; tunc nicaenae fidei damnatio conclamata est; ingemuit totus orbis et arianum se esse miratus est." St. Jerome, Dialogue against the Luciferians, 19. (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 329.)

the semi-Arians banished: Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste, Eleusius of Cyzicus, and Macedonius of Constantinople. But the Acacians' triumph was not longlived. Two or three years later, in the reign of Julian the Apostate, the party of Acacius, half disintegrated, joined the party of strict Arians. The victory of Arianism as a whole was not, despite appearances, fundamentally more solid. The death of Constantius, its powerful protector, in 361, deprived it of its strongest support and determined its ruin in the Roman Empire. The lack of consistency in its doctrine and organization were the better noted. The noise with which it had filled the world was often merely the clamor arising from its own internal strifes.

#### CHAPTER VII

The Church in the Reign of Julian the Apostate (361-363)

ARIANISM had profoundly disturbed the Roman world. Besides orthodox bishops, who were devout, charitable, beloved by the people, there were Arian bishops, court prelates. The latter followed the Emperor when he moved from place to place. Such was Eusebius of Nicomedia. They made their entry into the city seated in a chariot beside the prefect, as did Macedonius. Often they held their see, not by popular approval, but by favor of government powers, scarcely remained in residence at all, and engaged much more in political scheming than in the governing of their Church. No other circumstance so greatly favored the persistence of paganism as this decline of part of the Christian upper clergy.

When we consider this evil influence, we are not surprised at the lack of agreement, in the middle of the fourth century, between legislation and morals. Constantius enacted numerous prohibitions against the practice of the magical arts. Yet the inscriptions reveal the existence of colleges of augurs to the very end of his reign. He repeated Constantine's prescriptions against gladiators. Yet they were to be seen at official celebrations during the whole fourth century. He made numerous laws against idolatry. But "the very violence of the expressions used in the law makes them seem like vain threats of powerless denunciation." At the very time when the legis-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Marquardt, Römische Staatsverwaltung, III, 303. Corpus inscript., VI, 1690, 1695, 1700, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Theodosian Code, XV, XII, I f.

<sup>3</sup> Allard, Julien l'Apostat, I, 59.

lative documents would lead us to suppose that all the temples were closed or abandoned, the epigraphical monuments show paganism displaying itself in the plain light of day. In 360 the pagans no longer have a majority in the Roman Senate. But their influence in that body is not less preponderant: almost by right of inheritance they divide among themselves the priestly titles and the huge revenues attached thereto. Strange as it may seem, the legal penalties against paganism were terrible: yet we never hear of pagan martyrs. The sword of the law grows dull against practices which custom continues to favor.

# Julian's Education

There is one point on which the overthrow of Constantius' official Christianity is still more striking. The Arian Emperor took his young cousin Julian under his protection, confided his education to a bishop, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and had him baptized at an early age. All around the young Julian were to be seen ecclesiastical personages. Yet this prince, when he ascends the imperial throne to succeed Constantius, becomes the zealous propagator of paganism. True, special influences were added to those we have mentioned. While Eusebius and the priests of his entourage "were training Julian in the holy Letters," as Sozomen relates,8 his preceptor Mardonius had him reading the ancient poets and philosophers. Furthermore, the recollection of the massacres of members of his family, responsibility for which he laid upon his cousin Constantius, made the latter and his policy hateful to him. His temperament inclined him to the mystical reveries

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 17, to Valentinian, no. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Marquardt, op. cit., III, 217-220.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 251.

<sup>8</sup> Sozomen, V, 2.

of the Neoplatonists, to the practices of theurgy, and to Greek sophism. Arian Christianity, which his teachers had imparted to him, would be powerless to protect him against those outer and inner temptations.

"It is true that these were distinguished members of the Arian group, and that, in this school of religious sophistry, the Gospel was largely concealed by metaphysics. Occupied incessantly with questions as to the divine relationships and processions, they lost sight of the message of Christ, of His history, and of His work of salvation. In the conflict of the creeds, in the intrigues of the court bishops, and their eagerness to overthrow each other, the Church lamentably frittered away its prestige. Men like Eusebius, George, and Aetius did but feebly commend Christianity." 9

In 355 Constantius sent the young prince, as Caesar, to Gaul. Julian there showed himself to be an able and courageous general. His brilliant qualities, his serious and industrious life, brought him great popularity among the soldiers under his command. One evening during the year 360, while he was living at Lutetia, the soldiers came down from their camp, advanced to the imperial palace, 10 and proclaimed him Augustus. Julian decided to sustain this unexpected title by arms. At the head of his legions he marched to the East, there to fight Constantius. But he did not have to give battle to his cousin, for Constantius died at the foot of the Taurus Mountains on November 3, 361. On December 11 Julian made his entry into Constantinople amid the enthusiasm of the people, who acclaimed him as the sole and undisputed master of the Empire.

The new Emperor's political program was soon evident: to tear down whatever his uncle Constantine and his cousin

<sup>9</sup> Duchesne, op. cit., II, 255.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Important remains of this palace still exist. The camp was located on the western slope of the elevation since called Montagne Sainte-Geneviève.

Constantius had built up. The former had sustained orthodox Christianity; the latter, Arianism. Julian will devote all his efforts to rebuild the old pagan religion upon the ruins of abolished Catholicity and Arianism.

#### Condition of Arianism

Arianism, profoundly injured by its violent internal strifes, tried to revive by appearing in new forms. In 359 Bishop Serapion of Thmuis informed Athanasius that a number of the priests and people, rejecting Arius' doctrine concerning the Word, were professing false notions about the Holy Ghost. They regarded Him as simply a creature, a Spirit in the service of the Divinity, not differing from the angels except by a superior degree of perfection. Serapion called these heretics "Pneumatomachi," that is, enemies of the Holy Ghost. The principal leaders of the sect seem to have been two semi-Arian prelates: Macedonius, the former bishop of Constantinople, and Marathonius, bishop of Nicomedia. Hence the name Macedonians and Marathonians by which the adherents of this doctrine are often called.

#### The Pneumatomachi

The Pneumatomachi defended their ideas, now by Scripture, now by metaphysics. They also resorted to sophistic arguments that failed to impress men of reflection, but of a sort to persuade the masses. Either of the following propositions must be true, they said: the Holy Ghost is not begotten, and then we have two "Unbegottens," that is, two First Principles, two Gods; or else He is begotten, either by the Father or by the Son. But neither of these hypotheses can be held: if the Holy Ghost is begotten by the Father, He would be the

<sup>11</sup> St. Athanasius, Epistles to Serapion, Epistle 1, no. 1; P. G., XXVI, 532.

brother of the Son; and if He was begotten by the Son, He would be the nephew of the Father.

Athanasius in the four Letters to Serapion, which he wrote to lay bare the new heresy, also used dialectics. But he took a tone more becoming the important questions he was treating. He does indeed prove the divinity of the Holy Ghost by arguments taken directly from Holy Scripture and from tradition, and also by defending the whole dogma of the Trinity. But "the great doctor's perspicacity showed him a method that was more effective because it cast trouble into the camp of the Pneumatomachi, who were composed of heterogeneous elements. The Council of Nicaea, in defining the homoousios, had consecrated the idea of the divinity of the Son, and we know how greatly St. Athanasius contributed to that definition and with what courage he defended it. For him, the whole faith of the Church was contained in that symbol. He ceaselessly held it up before the Eastern quibblers. In his eyes a man was orthodox when he accepted it without reserve, and was not orthodox otherwise. But he also understood what a solid basis the definition of the homoousios supplied for confounding the adversaries of the Holy Ghost. It was enough, in fact, to show them the close relations between the Holy Ghost and the Son. Thus they were forced either to admit the divinity of the Holy Ghost, being thereby under the logical necessity of returning to orthodoxy, or to reject the homoousios, and hence being cast into the ranks of the discredited Arians.

"This cogent method was divided into two procedures. The first consisted in directly proving the consubstantiality of the Holy Ghost and the Son. Whence ensues the following argumentation: the Holy Ghost is consubstantial with the Son; but the Nicene faith teaches that the Son is consubstantial with the Father; therefore the Holy Ghost is consubstantial with the Father and the Son and, with them, is one and the

same God. The second procedure consisted in turning against the Pneumatomachi the parallelism of binary personal relations which the Arians employed unfairly, and saying to them: We both agree that the Holy Ghost is to the Son as the Son is to the Father. But the Council of Nicaea has defined that the Son has the same nature, the same eternity, the same divinity as the Father. Hence the Holy Ghost has the same nature, the same eternity, and the same divinity as both of them." <sup>12</sup>

Despite everything, the Macedonian heresy gained ground. At the time that Julian came into power, it had entered Constantinople, Thrace, Bithynia, the Hellespont, and the neighboring provinces. Whatever tended to reconstruct a mythology, an empyrean of demigods, pleased the masses, who were not yet rid of pagan influences. And the ambitious flattered these low instincts.

## Apollinarianism

Another heresy took a part no less harmful to the Church than Macedonianism. It, too, originated in the last years of Constantius' reign. It was Apollinarianism, founded by Apollinaris the Younger. This man had a brilliant, cultivated mind, and was a theologian, polemist, exegete, and man of letters. We shall meet him with his father, Apollinaris the Elder, when we relate the strife of the Christians against Julian the Apostate. At first he was one of the champions of the Council of Nicaea, a brother-in-arms of Athanasius. He never lost his detestation of Arius.

Not satisfied with denying the latter's doctrine, as the Pneumatomachi did, he undertook to combat it. But to save the idea of the consubstantiality of the Word, he mutilated the notion of the person of Christ. Apollinaris said he could not

<sup>12</sup> Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, III, 7 f.

comprehend the coexistence of two perfect natures in one single person. Wishing to safeguard the integrity of the divine nature in Christ, he held that the Redeemer, though possessing a human body animated by a sensitive soul, did not have a human rational mind. The conscience of true Christians rebelled at this. If the Word was united to a human nature stripped of its essential elements—reason and free will —how could we say, in keeping with tradition, that "He became man"? Until then the ancients had said that the Son of God took our nature in order to heal it. Did He, then, purpose excepting the intellect and will from this cure? And could we truly say, in keeping with the traditional teaching, that there were two natures in Christ? Such were the questions pondered by reflective men whose Christianity was deep in their souls. But those who were dazzled by Apollinaris' brilliant gifts and his fame for learning were easily seduced. St. Basil declares that almost all who read the works of Apollinaris were won by the charm of his thought and style.<sup>14</sup> His followers did not understand all his ideas in the same way, but, according to St. Epiphanius, they soon filled the whole East.15

#### The Schism of Antioch

Another conflict, which did not end in heresy but led to prolonged schism, broke out in the Church of Antioch just before Constantius' death. St. Eustathius, the valiant bishop of Antioch, had been expelled in 330, charged by his enemies with too ardently defending the Nicene faith. Since then the mother Church of Syria was occupied by Arian bishops. None

<sup>13</sup> Apollinaris, being a scholarly philosopher, recalled the Platonic trichotomy, embracing the  $\nu o \hat{v}s$ , the  $\psi v \chi \hat{\eta}$ , and the  $\sigma \hat{\omega} \mu \alpha$ . He denied that Christ possessed the  $\nu o \hat{v}s$ , which, he said, was replaced by the divine  $\lambda \delta \gamma o s$ .

<sup>14</sup> St. Basil, Letter 263, no. 4.

<sup>15</sup> St. Epiphanius, Haereses, LXVII, 2.

of them has left a name to history. Yet their unbroken influence for a period of thirty years resulted in the entrance of the mass of the population into the Arian communion.

There was, however, a small group of courageous Catholics who never recognized the authority of the usurpers and, in spite of persecutions, continued to practice their religion in private houses. They were called Eustathians. In 360, when the Arian Bishop Eudoxius exchanged his see for that of Constantinople, his friends chose in his place, with the Emperor's approval, a prelate of gentle manners and peaceful life. They hoped to make use of those qualities in the bishop to accomplish the success of their cause. His name was Meletius. He had already been bishop of Sebaste and, for some unknown reason, had resigned his office and, in his own home, led the life of a peaceful, virtuous priest.

Probably he was thought to be indifferent to the doctrinal disputes. But on the very day of his enthronement, Meletius, in his sermon clearly affirmed the consubstantiality of the Word. Yet he avoided using the expression consecrated by the Council of Nicaea. This profession of faith caused him to be exiled by Constantius less than thirty days after his election, and to be replaced in his see by a thorough Arian, Euzoios. The most heretical portion of the sect took their stand about the new bishop. The rest of the faithful were divided regarding Meletius. Many of them distrusted a man who was chosen by the Arians. But his outspoken profession of faith and his unjust exile seemed to others to assure the validity of his election. In short, when Julian entered upon the direction of the Empire, the Church of Antioch contained three parties: the Arians, the Meletians, and those who, recognizing neither Euzoios nor Meletius, kept the name of Eustathians. These last, without a bishop, were under the charge of a devout priest named Paulinus.16

<sup>16</sup> The real character of the Antioch schism has not yet become clear. According

#### Aerianism

Like the Meletian Schism, Aerianism sprang from a hierarchical conflict. Aerius, a priest of the diocese of Sebaste, in 360 withdrew from his bishop, Eustathius, whom he blamed for having abandoned his resolutions of the ascetic life. Giving up his position of hospital chaplain, to which his bishop had appointed him, he began to dogmatize, rejecting the Easter ceremonies as a Jewish rite, prayers for the dead as useless, and the Church fasts as an arbitrary regulation of a Christian's mortification. In justification of his rebellion he also maintained the equality of priests and bishops in the matter of jurisdiction and the right to ordain. Cardinal Bellarmine rightly accuses Protestantism of adopting certain theories of Aerius. The rebellious priest succeeded in drawing after him a certain number of the faithful. They used to meet in the open air, in woods, on hillsides, brazenly defying the authorities. "They professed to abandon all things," says Tillemont, "yet nearly all of them were given to excessive wine-drinking and gluttony." 17

But Eustathius had already placed himself at the head of a group of dissenters. This strange man, one of the most

to Leclercq, "back of the question of persons, it was known that the real issue was the question of the numerical oneness of the divine substance and the Nicene homo-ousios." Hefele-Leclercq, Histoire des conciles, I, 646, note 2. Cavallera, on the contrary, considers the conflict created by the Antioch schism to be a purely disciplinary question. (Le Schisme d'Antioche, p. 323.) The Protestants of Germany attempt to explain the schism as a result of conflict between two opposing theologies, one of them the Meletian, being merely a deformation of the doctrine of Nicaea. A Catholic writer, Father Bouvy, would explain the conflict by a duality of theological tradition, understood in a different way. See Bouvy, La Methode historique et les Pères de l'Église, in the Revue augustinienne, VI (1905), 171. Cf. Saltet, Le Schisme d'Antioche au IVe siècle in the Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique, VIII (1906), 123 ff.; Salaville, art. "Eustathiens d'Antioche," in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 1574-1577.

<sup>17</sup> Tillemont, *Mémoires*, IX, 88. Tillemont's judgment is based on St. Basil, Letter 263.

unusual characters of the fourth century, at first appears as a priest of strict morals, irreproachable virtue, and great charity toward the poor. He was one of the earliest propagators of the monastic life and, by all these qualities, won the heart of St. Basil, who "recognized him as being something better than the common run of mortals." 18 But soon St. Basil speaks of him as "a cloud being borne according to the changes of the winds." 19 Eustathius' mind was incapable of becoming fixed and settled. "Of the numerous formularies which the disputes of that period produced, there was almost none that was not subscribed to by him." 20 In 340 the Council of Gangres noted that he already had followers, and these were condemned "for having perverted the exercises of the ascetical life and for arrogantly setting themselves above the common life." 21 After Constantius' death, Eustathius of Sebaste seems to have been associated with the party of the Macedonians, among whom he counted some close friends. From the moral point of view the Eustathians formed a complete contrast to the Arians. They represented rigorism in the presence of laxity. None of the early lists of heretics mentions Eustathius and the Eustathians. Nevertheless their sect constituted a disturbing element in the Church.22

## Novatians

Besides the recently formed sects, there were a few older parties. In the neighborhood of Constantinople and Alexandria, groups of Novatians still taught that "the Church

<sup>18</sup> St. Basil, Letter 212, no. 2.

<sup>19</sup> St. Basil, Letter 244, no. 9.

<sup>20</sup> Allard, Saint Basile, pp. 123 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Mansi, II, 1095. On the followers of Eustathius, see Salaville, art. "Eustathiens" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 1571-1574.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> These Eustathians, followers of Eustathius of Sebaste, should not be confused with the Eustathians of Antioch spoken of *supra*.

is the congregation of the pure," that any sin committed after baptism has the effect of excluding the sinner from this assembly, and that no one except God has the power to forgive such a fault.<sup>23</sup> In Africa the Donatists, at first affected by the death of Donatus of Carthage in 355, recovered their confidence under the guidance of a no less belligerent leader, Bishop Parmenius. When Julian the Apostate came into power, they wrote to the new emperor as "to him who alone possessed justice," begging him to restore their basilicas to them and to grant them the freedom of action which they enjoyed of old under Constantine.<sup>24</sup>

## Recall of Exiled Bishops

The historian Ammianus Marcellinus says that one of Julian's first cares, after occupying the palace in Constantinople, was to convene there the principal leaders of the dissenting sects with their followers. Consequently to the imperial court came Bishop Eudoxius whom the Arians had put in the see of Constantinople in 360 in place of the semi-Arian Macedonius, Macedonius himself who was now an heresiarch, the leading Novatians, Eustathians, and Aerians, and also the chiefs of the different parties that had sprung up in Antioch as a result of the election of Meletius.

To all the representatives of these different parties, Julian spoke in the same strain.

"He expressed his wish that, their dissensions being appeased, each without any hindrance might fearlessly follow the religion he preferred." <sup>26</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Socrates, II, 38; VII, 12.

<sup>24</sup> St. Optatus, Against the Donatists, II, 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> "Dissidentes christianorum antistites cum plebe discissa in palatium intromissos." (Ammianus, Roman History, XXII, 5.)

<sup>26</sup> Ammianus, loc. cit.

Toward the end of 361 or early the following year, an imperial edict recalled the bishops of every party who were exiled by his predecessor and restored their confiscated property.<sup>27</sup> Thus not only Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste, Eleusius of Cyzicus, Photinus of Sirmium, and Aetius, but also Athanasius, Meletius of Antioch, Eusebius of Vercelli, and Lucifer of Cagliari were able to return to their dioceses. Could the Catholic Church, then, count on the return of an era of liberty? Nothing of the sort.

The pagan Ammianus Marcellinus points out the snare which the new emperor held out to Christianity. He says:

"Julian did this the more resolutely because, as long license increased their dissensions, he thought he should never have to fear the unanimity of the common people." <sup>28</sup> Ammianus knew the Emperor's designs against the Christian sects. He says: "Julian found by experience that no wild beasts are so hostile to men as Christian sects in general are to one another." <sup>29</sup>

Of course he understood that such comparisons did not apply to men like Athanasius and his orthodox fellow-bishops. But he was sufficiently aware of their love of justice to know that, by recalling them from exile without at the same time expelling their rival usurpers from their sees, he would start endless conflicts. The Emperor also expected that the mingling of pagans in the religious disputes would make these still more bitter. The events that had just taken place in Antioch must have strengthened him in this view.

On November 30, 361, the pagans of the Syrian capital, when news arrived that Emperor Constantius was dead, rushed to the house of his protégé, the usurper Bishop George, had dragged him off to prison. This court prelate, whose en-

<sup>27</sup> Socrates, III, 1; Rufinus, I, 27.

<sup>28</sup> Ammianus, loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem.

thronement was accomplished by force and whose government was marked by cruelties, exactions, and delations, had made himself equally odious to pagans and orthodox Christians. The latter, respecting St. Peter's command, did not return evil for evil <sup>30</sup> to the wicked shepherd. But the pagans declared themselves satisfied only when, on the morning of December 25, they took the unfortunate bishop out of prison and hatefully put him to death. His corpse was dragged through the city, as were the bodies of two government officials of Constantius. When Julian learned of these crimes, the only penalty he thought of inflicting was to issue orders that a careful search be made for the rare books which might have disappeared in the pillage of Bishop George's library, which contained many precious volumes. As to the authors of this act of brigandage and these murderers, they were pardoned.

Happily the return of the exiles had results quite different from painful rivalries. Athanasius' entry into his episcopal city of Alexandria (February 21, 362) was a veritable triumphal procession. "The people, grouped by sex and by age, or following their society banners, went forth to meet him. From every part of Egypt people came to see him. Popular veneration for him was so great that, as he passed by, some tried to be touched by his shadow, persuaded that it would heal them, as in the case of St. Peter's shadow. Athanasius advanced, seated on an ass, after the example of the Savior entering Jerusalem. As soon as he entered one of the streets, applause broke out. Perfumes were poured out or burned. In the evening the whole city was illuminated. Feasts were held in the houses, and in the public squares corporation dinners took place." <sup>32</sup> Julian took umbrage at such a popularity. On

<sup>30</sup> See I Peter 3: 9.

<sup>31</sup> Acts 5: 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Allard, Julien l'Apostat, II, 298. Cf. St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, XXI, 27-29.

the ground that Athanasius had been exiled by several decrees and had escaped the penalties against him by flight, the Emperor decided, rather tardily, to declare him excluded from the amnesty and published a decree to this effect.<sup>33</sup>

## Council of Alexandria (362)

But the fearless Patriarch, confident of the devotedness of his Alexandrians, and rightly thinking that the government would not venture to enter into conflict with a whole aroused population, decided to pay no attention to an edict that was manifestly unjust. He therefore quietly prepared the convening of a council in his episcopal city. He considered it urgently necessary to secure the decisions of authority regarding the recently incited quarrels. The Council assembled in the first part of 362, probably in the spring of that year. Only twentyone bishops were present. But several of them had so considerable an influence upon the Church because of their virtues and the persecutions they had suffered for the true faith that, as Rufinus says, this assembly was called "the Council of the Confessors." Moreover, a majority of the bishops without delay gave their explicit approval to its declarations, and the entire Church did so tacitly.34 The march of events was considerably affected by its decisions. These treated of the admis-

<sup>88</sup> See the text of this decree in Allard, op. cit., II, 299 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Why did not Pope Liberius personally concern himself with this council, instead of leaving the initiative and the direction of the council to Athanasius? Many writers think that, however slight we may suppose Liberius' weakness at Sirmium and however enthusiastic may have been the welcome of the people of Rome upon his return from banishment, he did not yet feel that, in the eyes of the Eastern bishops, his prestige was sufficient to lead back men who had strayed from the right way. A few years would have to elapse before he recovers in the whole Church the place occupied by his great predecessors. No doubt he preferred to leave the active part to Athanasius, whose prestige was immense. Moreover, the doctrinal decisions of the Council of Alexandria (362), accepted by the universal Church, could obtain and in fact have obtained the infallible authority attached to the magisterium ordinarium of the Church.

sion of repentant Arians into the Church, the errors of the Macedonians about the Holy Ghost, the meaning of the Greek words *ousia* and *hypostasis* in the expression of the doctrine of the Trinity, the false teaching of Apollinaris about Christ's humanity, and the extinction of the Meletian Schism at Antioch.

Despite opposition by a few rigorists of the school of Lucifer of Cagliari, the Council decided that all who, under duress or otherwise, had made common cause with the Arians, without professing the heresy, could resume their functions and offices in the Church. As to the leaders or defenders of heretical parties, upon manifesting their repentance they could return to the communion of the Church, but could not belong to the clergy. Athanasius and his friends, to further the acceptance of these decisions, appealed to the Savior's teaching about the return of the prodigal son. Pope Liberius expressly approved the resolutions, which were soon accepted by the entire Church.

The Council next declared that "the Spirit is of the same substance and divinity as the Father and the Son," and it attached so great importance to this declaration that it required every Arian wishing to return to the Church to subscribe to this formula.

The Council then considered the regrettable misunderstandings which were caused by the lack of clear definition of the Greek words ousia, hypostasis, and prosopon. When the Latins, considering ousia and hypostasis as synonyms, said there were three hypostases in the Trinity, they seemed to the Greeks to be admitting three substances and thus professing rank Arianism. On the other hand, when the Greeks said that in God there were three prosopa, they appeared to the Latins to be professing merely three aspects, three "visages,"

<sup>85</sup> Letter to Vincentius, P. L., VIII, 1372.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Mansi, III, 356; St. Jerome, Dialogue against the Luciferians, 20.

like the Sabellians. St. Athanasius, who knew both tongues perfectly, explained to the Fathers of the Council that, under different verbal forms, the Latins and the Greeks meant the same thing. It was decided that henceforth everyone could use the formula to which he was accustomed, on condition of meaning it in a way conformable to the Nicene doctrine.<sup>37</sup> Regardless of what Apollinaris the Younger said, the Council declared that the Word of God truly became man, taking not only a human body, but also a soul like to ours.<sup>38</sup>

Lastly the Council addressed to the faithful of Antioch an appeal for conciliation, in the form of a lengthy letter written by Athanasius, Eusebius of Vercelli, and Asterius of Amasia. Eusebius and Asterius were commissioned to deliver the letter to the Church of Antioch. But unfortunately this mission could not be carried out. The ardent Lucifer of Cagliari was beforehand. He had even refused to attend the Council of Alexandria so that he might better combat the extreme parties of Antioch. When Eusebius and Asterius reached the Syrian capital. Lucifer had already given the Eustathians a bishop in the person of the priest Paulinus. This promotion of Paulinus to the episcopacy prevented the solution of the pending difficulties. Besides, Lucifer expressed his dissatisfaction with the indulgent measures taken by the Council with regard to the Arians and announced his break with Athanasius and the latter's friends. He then placed himself at the head of a new schism, which was called the Schism of the Luciferians.

Aside from this last incident, the Council of Alexandria had a double consequence. On one hand, the measures of pacification voted at Alexandria had all the effects which Athanasius' sagacity hoped for. In a short time the conversions increased on all sides. In fact, Athanasius, a few years

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, XXI.

<sup>38</sup> St. Athanasius, Tome or Synodal Letter to the People of Antioch, 3, 7.

later, could say that the Nicene faith was that of the whole world.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the stubborn Arians, aware of their relationship to the pagans, drew closer to the Emperor. Julian accorded his entire favor to Aetius, the leader of the Anomoeans, giving him as a present an estate on the island of Lesbos.<sup>40</sup> About the same time he wrote to the heresiarch Photinus as follows: "I praise you for denying that he who had been considered God could have taken flesh in the womb of a woman." St. Athanasius' words in his *Letter to the Monks of Egypt* were fulfilled: "There is no middle course," he said, speaking of the Arians; "they must admit the consubstantiality, or else give up the name of Christian."

#### Exile of St. Athanasius

Athanasius' success was not limited to converting Arians. Idolaters themselves, witnesses to so many virtues, went to him and embraced the Christian religion. Julian's anger was overflowing. To Aedychius, the governor of Egypt, he wrote:

"By all the gods, nothing could give me more pleasure than that thou shouldst expel from every corner of Egypt, Athanasius, that criminal who has dared, during my reign, to baptize Greek wives of illustrious citizens. He must be persecuted." <sup>41</sup>

Athanasius, resolved not to give occasion for any disorder, did not wait for the imperial armed force to expel him. The very day the edict of his banishment was published on the streets of Alexandria (October 23, 362), he left the city, saying to the friends that accompanied him: "Be of good heart; this is only a passing cloud, and will soon disappear."

<sup>39</sup> St. Athanasius, Epistola ad Jovianum, no. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Philostorgius, Ecclesiastical History, IX, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Julian, Letter 6; Allard, op. cit., II, 302. See Œuvres complète de l'empereur Julien.

The cloud would disappear a few months later, at the death of Julian the Apostate. The holy Patriarch, after hiding a little while very near Alexandria, reached Memphis and from there wrote his Paschal Letter for 363. Then he went far into the Thebaid. 42 The deep solitudes of the desert and the silent, austere life of the monks had always been the consolation of his exiles. "When he was nearing Hermopolis, the bishops and clergy, Abbots Theodore and Pammon with their monks, came to meet him and received him with public solemnity. Then it was that Athanasius visited the island of Tabennisi and its famous monastery. He examined its rule and noted everything, taking interest in the minutest details of the monastic life. He retained a deep remembrance of this visit. When Abbot Theodore died in 368, Athanasius at once sent a letter of condolence and encouragement to Abbot Horsisius 43 and his monks." 44

# The Donatists

While Julian was thus banishing the greatest champion of orthodoxy, he extended his favor to the most violent of the schismatics. The Donatist bishops, exiled since 348 by Emperor Constans, were not included in the edict recalling those banished by Constantius. But they addressed a suppliant request to the Emperor in which they call him the one "who alone possessed justice." Julian understood that the greatest outrage he could inflict upon the Catholics would be to reestablish the terrible African schismatics in all their former offices. The wording of his rescript was most generous and benevolent toward the latter.

<sup>42</sup> Chronicon syriacum, year 363; Chronicon acephalum, no. 11; P. G., XXVI, 1446.

<sup>43</sup> St. Athanasius, Epistola ad Orsisium, P. G., XXVI, 978 f.; Annales du musée Guimet, XVII, 268 f., 293, 332, 704 f.

<sup>44</sup> Le Bachelet, art. "Athanase" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 2152.

His expectation was not disappointed. A frightful religious war soon broke out in Africa. Even before receiving the Emperor's reply, the Donatist prelates, accompanied by the usual mob of idlers, destitute farmers, and fugitive slaves, that formed the sect's army, tried to drive the Catholics out of their churches. After the reception of the imperial rescript, their audacity increased.

The scholarly Tillemont sums up the story of the cruelties of the Donatists against the Catholics in the year 362, in his concise and straightforward style, which often becomes eloquent. He says: "When the Donatists made themselves master of a few churches, they smashed the altars in them, on which the body and blood of Christ had reposed. St. Optatus relates that, for this purpose, they engaged a multitude of vile wretches who were given, as pay for their crimes, the wine intended for the holy sacrifice, or even already consecrated. This first indignity was followed by another—the destruction of the chalices. These they reduced to ingots which they sold to anybody.

"St. Optatus, returning to the story of their deeds of violence, gives horrifying accounts of them. First, he speaks of what was done at Lemellef in Mauretania Sitifensis by Felix of Diabe (or Zabe) and Januarius of Flumenpiscis in the same province. These two Donatist bishops, with a large crowd of people, went to Lemellef, where they found the basilica closed. The Catholics were in the church attending the holy sacrifice. Felix and Januarius directed their mob to climb upon the roof, make openings in it, and hurl tiles upon the people inside. This order was immediately carried out. The Catholic deacons attempted to protect the altar. Several of them were wounded, and two were killed by the tiles thrown at them. The slain deacons were Primus, son of Januarius, and Donatus, son of Nimy. Their names have been placed in

the Roman Martyrology as holy martyrs, under date of February 9.

"But the Donatists' best-known crimes are the ones they committed at Tipasa, a city of Mauretania Caesariensis. Two of their Numidian bishops came there, Urban of Forma and Felix of Indicra. They were assisted by some archers and backed by the governor of the province, who was there in person. The torn bodies of men, maltreated women, and massacred children were the bloody viands with which the bishops gratified the hunger of the Church of the Donatists. By way of violating all that is holiest and most sacred, they commanded the Eucharist to be cast to the dogs." <sup>45</sup> Thus, says St. Optatus, the hand that reopened the pagan temples, at the same time let loose a frightful tempest upon the Church of Africa.

# Julian's Persecution

It does not seem that Emperor Julian positively wanted all this carnage. "In the strict and literal sense of the word," says Paul Allard, "Julian should not be reckoned among the persecutors." <sup>46</sup> At least we can say that, at the beginning of his reign, he did not intend persecuting the Christians to the point of bloodshed. No one surpassed Julian in hatred for the religion of Him whom he persistently refused to call anything but "the Galilean." But at first he thought he could abolish that religion by legal measures, by philosophical discussions, and by clever overtures to the Christians. The success thus obtained was merely partial and transient. The passions of the crowd, stirred up against the followers of Christ, broke loose. Christian blood was shed in uprisings which the Emperor failed to suppress. Later, "after beginning

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, vol. 6, arts. 54, 55, 56 passim. Cf. St. Optatus, Against the Donatists, II, 16-26.

<sup>46</sup> Allard, op. cit., III, 319.

his reign as a philosopher, he ended it as a persecutor." <sup>47</sup> And so his first move against Christianity was really "a mild and seductive persecution," according to St. Jerome's expression. This early phase of the persecution was cold and calculating. It was marked by the use of various tactics which we must now set forth.

#### Seduction of Christians

Julian was sufficiently acquainted with the Catholic world to perceive that it contained, especially since Constantine's conversion, a number of rather lukewarm Christians who had been impelled by ambition toward positions of authority. He was mistaken as to the number and importance of these weak members and thought he could destroy the power of the Church by appointing Christians to public office and positions of honor, by enticing promises, and even by gifts of money. As St. Gregory Nazianzen says, this was a veritable "bargaining." 48

Some Christians were caught in the trap and, according to the words of the pagan Libanius, "led the choir at the altars of the gods." <sup>49</sup> In this number were Count Julian (the Emperor's uncle), Elpidius (a treasurer), Felix (an overseer), and even a bishop (Pegasius of Ilius) who obtained a high rank in the reorganized pagan clergy. But solid Christians had no fear.

"Tried in this furnace as it were, it at once became evident to all who were the real Christians, and who were merely nominal ones. Such as were Christians in integrity of heart, very readily resigned their commission, choosing to endure anything rather than deny

<sup>47</sup> Jules Simon, Histoire de l'École d'Alexandrie, II, 338.

<sup>48</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, VII, 11.

<sup>49</sup> Libanius, Epitaphios Juliani.

Christ. Of this number were Jovian, Valentinian, and Valens, each of whom was afterward invested with the imperial dignity." <sup>50</sup>

# Antichristian Argumentation

Julian had great confidence in argumentation and particularly in his skill in handling it. It would seem that his philosophical discussions turned to his advantage in Gaul, where he dazzled his opponents. At least such was his claim. As we are told by Ammianus Marcellinus, the Emperor tried to win over the leaders of the Church by inviting them to his palace and attempting to ensnare them by questions regarding the most difficult texts of Scripture.<sup>51</sup> St. Cyril reports a long discussion by the Emperor with one of the wisest bishops about the sacrifice of Cain and Abel.<sup>52</sup>

But generally he encountered unyielding resistance. "Now, listen to me," he would say, "as the Alamanni and the Franks did." 53 One of the men that Julian for a while hoped to win by this method was the court physician, named Caesarius. This would have been a most brilliant victory. Caesarius, brother of the famous St. Gregory Nazianzen, was a man renowned and highly esteemed. The Emperor assailed him time and again. Caesarius was a sincere Christian or rather catechumen, for he was not yet baptized. His faith seemed to waver. His brother wrote him urgent letters, begging him to leave the court of the Apostate.54 A day came when Caesarius saw the danger of a combat in which his soul was the stake. "I am a Christian," he declared, "and I will never cease being so." The Emperor terminated the discussion and postponed a continuance of the debate. But Caesarius did not wait. He left the court at once and went to Cappadocia to his

<sup>50</sup> Socrates, III, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Ammianus, XXII, 5.

<sup>52</sup> St. Cyril, Adversus Julianum, 10.

<sup>53</sup> Ammianus, XXII, 5.

<sup>54</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 7.

aged father and saintly mother, who were at last freed from their anxiety.

## Attempts to Revive Paganism

Julian, however, was already putting his trust in another form of proselytism. Not merely did he combat Christianity by pointing out numerous supposed difficulties in its doctrine and worship, but he tried to snatch souls from it by drawing them to a paganism clothed in all the splendors of beauty. His Discourse on the Sun-King, written in the winter of 362, is a hymn full of poetry, deifying the powers of nature. "The Sun is my king," he says, "I am its servant. My trust in it rests upon secret reasons which I keep to myself. But this I can say without offense to the religion of my conscience: from my early years I have been struck by love for the brightness of the Sun." In the mind of the philosopher-emperor the Sun held a place between the higher gods, who live in the empyrean, and the lower divine powers, that have to do with creatures. It touches both heaven and earth. Aristotle was right when he said that, to make a man, it is necessary to have another man and the Sun. People are right in giving to the Sun the names Apollo, Bacchus, and even Jupiter. Viewed metaphysically, Julian's conception was weak, but it cleverly combined the naturalist ideas of the philosophers, the fictions of the poets, the heart of Oriental myths, and the traditional worship of the old national divinities.

The Discourse on the Sun-King was soon followed by the Book against the Christians. In this Julian claimed to consider side by side the greatness of the pagan religion and the pettiness of the religion of the Christians. Says Libanius: "The Emperor attacked the books that present a man of Palestine as a God, and he showed the absurdity and stupidity of what is adored in that man." <sup>55</sup> Judging from the fragments

<sup>55</sup> Libanius, loc. cit.

which St. Cyril of Alexandria has preserved of this work, we may say that it is connected with the old attacks by Celsus and Porphyry.<sup>56</sup> It has the same sarcastic tone, the same lack of sincerity in the interpretation of Scriptural texts, the same accumulation of gross insults.<sup>57</sup>

The book did not have the success which the royal author hoped for it. It possessed but little philosophical and historical value. Probably the pagans took no pains to spread it, and Christian opinion, as a whole, ignored it. In the West, it provoked neither protest nor reply. In the East no one before St. Cyril of Alexandria bothered to refute it.

# Disqualification of Christians

Another tactical move by Julian to turn Christians from their faith was to exclude them from holding public office, whether civil or military. No doubt there were many defections among the imperial office-holders. Merely nominal Christians who, to tell the truth, professed not so much the religion of Christ as the religion of the sovereign, abjured Christianity for the sake of keeping their positions. But St. Gregory Nazianzen, a contemporary of these events, relates that a considerable number "not only among those in the lowest ranks, but also among illustrious leaders in high office," showed themselves as unvielding as a strong rampart being vainly assaulted by a frail war-machine." 58 With regard to government officials who defected, we are told by another contemporary, Asterius of Amasia, that they "bore disgrace on their brows and roamed the cities like objects of detestation. People used to point them out as traitors who had denied Christ for a little money." 59

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> See Mourret, op. cit., I, 347, 441.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Nearly all that we have of Julian's work has been preserved for us in the refutation by St. Cyril of Alexandria, P. G., LXXVI, 490-1064.

<sup>58</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, IV, 65.

<sup>59</sup> Asterius of Amasea, Homily 3; P. G., XL, 208.

#### Education Laws

Julian's most terrible weapon against Christianity was his school legislation. Previously teaching had been unrestricted in the Roman Empire. Says Cicero: "Our people have never wished to have any system of education for the free-born youth which is either definitely fixed by law or officially established or uniform in all cases." 60 The first Flavians, then the Antonines took a step in the direction of public education by endowing certain teachers at state expense,61 but without restricting the freedom of the teaching. Some cities likewise established and endowed chairs of grammar, medicine, and law. The State encouraged these organizations by granting the teachers an exemption from many obligations, such as taxes, tutorage, military service, and quartering of soldiers. The details which Libanius and St. Gregory Nazianzen give about Athens in the fourth century and about its students divided by nationality, their riotous practices, their festivities, and their fondness for discussions and disputes, make one think of university life in Paris in the time of Robert de Sorbon and St. Louis.

Antioch, Alexandria, Caesarea in Palestine, Caesarea in Cappadocia, Constantinople, Rome, Autun, Treves, Bordeaux, and Carthage had their great schools, and there were Christian teachers in them. St. Basil's father taught rhetoric at Caesarea in Cappadocia. Basil himself, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, and the Apollinarises gave public instruction. We may know its spirit and method from St. Basil's fine homily on the *Manner of Reading the Profane Authors*. These Christian teachers, while presenting the pagan authors as models of literature, refuted their false ideas.<sup>62</sup> And two cen-

<sup>60</sup> Cicero, The Republic, IV, 3.

<sup>61</sup> Suetonius, Lives of the Twelve Caesars: Vespasian, 18.

<sup>62</sup> A pupil's exercise has been found, refuting the fable of Adonis. Evidently it

turies before Constantine, the Christians possessed at least one free establishment of higher education, the School of Alexandria, founded by St. Pantaenus and made famous by Clement and Origen.

Constantine, after his conversion, did not attempt to restrict the freedom of teaching among the pagans any more than had the pagan emperors in the case of Christian teachers. Iamblichus and Libanius, both pagans, to mention only these two, taught freely under Constantine and under Constantius.<sup>63</sup>

# Julian's School Legislation

By a law of June 17, 362, and by one or two more explicit decrees, Julian completely overthrew this custom. The law of June 17 allows cities to appoint professors for the chairs founded in them only on condition of the emperor's ratification.<sup>64</sup> The edict declares

"it is necessary that all those who devote themselves to teaching should have good morals [and by 'good morals' he means the public profession of paganism] and experience in their souls sentiments that do not differ from those they express in public." <sup>65</sup>

For Julian this meant belief in the divinities of paganism and hatred of Christianity. And he went still further. Says Socrates:

"He enacted a law by which Christians were excluded from the cultivation of literature: 'Lest,' said he, 'when they have sharpened their tongue, they should be able the more readily to meet the argu-

echoes a lesson by his teacher. See Jullien, Les Professeurs de littérature dans l'ancienne Rome, p. 305.

<sup>63</sup> De Rossi, Bulletino di archeologia cristiana, 1863, p. 19.

<sup>64</sup> Theodosian Code, XIII, III, 5.

<sup>65</sup> This decree is numbered 42 in Julian's letters (ed. by Hertlein), pp. 544-547.

ments of the heathen.' " 66 This sentence may be an excerpt from another of Julian's decrees on education. 67

A second fragment may be indicated in these words of the Emperor, quoted by St. Gregory Nazianzen: "To us belong the eloquence and art of Greece, as also the worship of the gods; to you, ignorance and boorishness, and nothing beyond these words, I think: this is your wisdom." 68

#### Enforcement of the Decrees

Julian's decrees were carried out pitilessly. St. Chrysostom tells us that a large number of Christian physicians and rhetoricians left their professional chairs rather than give up their religion. Such were Victorinus in Rome, Prohaeresius in Athens. To lessen the effects of the law, the aim of which was to condemn the Christians to an intellectual inferiority, two former Christian teachers (Apollinaris the Elder and Apollinaris the Younger) undertook to write the Psalms in the form of odes, the Mosaic Books in the form of epic poems, and the teachings of the Gospel in the form of dialogues after the manner of Plato. But a classical literature cannot be improvised even by great scholars. The consequence of Julian's school legislation would have been disastrous if it had not been, in fact, abrogated by his death. "On no point," says St. Gregory Nazianzen, "did Julian appear more detestable. Let all who love eloquence share my just indignation." 70

<sup>66 &</sup>quot;Νόμω ἐκέλευε χριστιανοῦς παιδεύσεως μὴ μετέχειν, ΐνα μὴ φησὶν, ἀκονώμενοι τὴν γλῶτταν, ἐτοίμως πρὸς τοῦς διαλεκτικοὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀπαντῶσιν." Socrates, III, 12. Cf. Allard, op. cit., II, 361.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Bidez and Cumont, Recherches sur la tradition manuscrite des lettres de l'empereur Julien, p. 14, note 4.

<sup>68</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, IV, 102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Valentinian withdrew it officially in 364.

<sup>70</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, IV, 100.

# Popular Uprisings

Julian would gladly have destroyed Christianity without shedding a drop of blood. He wrote: "By the gods, I have no wish that the Galileans should be unjustly murdered or maltreated, or that they should suffer any loss." 71 Probably he was sincere in speaking thus. "He was not unaware," says Sozomen, "that it would have been supremely imprudent to employ torture to force unwilling men to sacrifice. He knew that violence is of no effect in matters that depend on free will." But he aroused popular passions against the Christians; and those passions broke loose. At Emesa and Epiphania, Bacchic processions entered the church with a statue of Dionysius, which was set up on the altar. 72 The Christian cemetery at Emesa was given to the flames.<sup>73</sup> The aged Marcus, bishop of Arethusa, the same one who had saved Julian at the time of the massacre in 337, was denounced to the Emperor as guilty of mistreating the pagans and destroying a temple. When sentenced to rebuild the temple, he refused to do so.

"He was then given over to the mob, who dragged him through the streets, tearing out his beard, and tormenting him in a thousand ways; then he was given over to the school children, who amused themselves by tossing him in the air to catch him on their sharppointed styluses; finally, he was smeared with honey, bruised as he was, and exposed to the wasps. Yet they did not finish him; he survived this abominable treatment. At Alexandria, Ascalon, Gaza, and Heliopolis, the pagan population was continually breaking out into disturbances. Priests and virgins were massacred with horrible refinements of cruelty. . . . Julian did not interfere." 74

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Julian, Letter 7 (quoted in Negri, Julian the Apostate, II, 408. Tr.).

<sup>72</sup> Chron. pasch., p. 296.

<sup>73</sup> Julian, The Misopogon, I, 272.

<sup>74</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 265.

# Martyrdom of St. John and St. Paul

Finally he himself took a hand in these tortures. We find this fact mentioned in several Acts of martyrs, notably in the case of John and Paul. These two saints were brothers. Their family name is unknown. We are informed merely that they held some office at court and belonged to the Palatine guard in the reigns of Constantine, Constans, and Constantius. When Julian came into power, they left the guard and retired to their home on the Coelian Hill. Their withdrawal had the appearance of a protest, and Julian ordered them to rejoin the guard. They refused. Foreseeing the outcome of the event, they distributed all their possessions among the poor. The Emperor commanded them to obey his orders within ten days. As they continued in their refusal, they were slain in a hall of their own house. Their bodies were buried secretly and the police spread a report that they had been exiled.

But some of the martyrs' acquaintances discovered their bodies. This started pious pilgrimages. Christians came to the martyrs' tomb and prayed for the courage needed in those trying times. Some miracles took place. The son of one of the Emperor's officers was suddenly cured there of a grievous disease. This led to other massacres. Several pilgrims were taken by surprise and decapitated on the spot. Two priests, John and Pigmentius, guilty of rendering funeral honors to these new victims, were then slain, and Senator Flavian, charged with the same offense, was banished. "The discovery of the martyrs' house on the Coelian Hill and the existence of their tomb there, as the Acts point out, have made the episode of their martyrdom one of the most certain and captivating events of archaeology." <sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Allard, Études d'histoire et d'archéologie, pp. 159-220. Cf. Grisar, in the Civiltà cattolica, 1895, I, 214-218; Batiffol, in the Bulletin critique, 1887, p. 476; Dufourcq, Étude sur les gesta martyrum romains, pp. 144-152, 309 f.

Among the other victims of Julian's persecution, we should mention St. Theodoret, a priest of Antioch, who was put to death by Count Julian, the Emperor's uncle; St. Juventinus and St. Maximinus, executed by order of the Apostate himself, for publicly deploring the condition of the Christians and the violence to which they were subjected; St. Basil of Ancyra, who died amidst most atrocious tortures, for encouraging Christians to reject the promises of the Emperor; the young martyr St. Theodore, caught near the sanctuary of Daphne while he was praying there at the tomb of St. Babylas; St. Cyril, a deacon, and his companions; the deaconess Publia, the young men of Pessinonte, and the virgins of Heliopolis.<sup>76</sup>

# Julian's Psychology

In persecuting Christianity, Julian does not seem to have been prompted by the whimsical cruelty of a Nero or the cupidity of a Domitian or that misconceived devotion to the safety of the Empire, such as obsessed a Trajan, or the philosophical jealousy of a Marcus Aurelius. It was as a devotee of paganism that Julian harassed the Church. Before becoming the persecutor of his brothers in Christ, he was the victim of Greek sophistry, a prey of that idolatrous mysticism that sprang from the religious syncretism of all the Eastern and Western religions.

This young prince grew up without relatives and married without love. His natural faculties seem never to have been well balanced.<sup>77</sup> In his soul all the baneful influences of a period of decadence had a profound and disastrous effect. Brave on the battle-field without being a great general, serious and austere to the point of oddity, in his youth he engaged in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> See the Acts of all these martyrs in Leclercq, Les Martyrs, III, 71-118.

<sup>77 &</sup>quot;Giuliano era un uomo squilibrato." Negri, L'Emperatore Giuliano l'Apostata, p. 399.

practices of theurgy and occultism, surrounded himself with visionaries and magicians. Within the bounds of the Catholic Church his restless soul might have found the correctives needed by his very impressionable temperament. His great fault and misfortune was to apostatize from the faith of his childhood. Once he became emperor, left to himself and to self-seeking, flattering advisers, he inflicted incalculable harm upon Christianity in the space of two years. Moreover, his passion inclined him as eagerly to the restoration of the pagan religion as it did to the destruction of the Christian religion. At the outset of his reign, this was his chief aim; soon it became his fixed purpose.

# First Pagan Manifestation

He manifested this idea only gradually.

"Although from his earliest childhood he was inclined to the worship of the gods, and gradually, as he grew up, became more attached to it, yet he was influenced by many apprehensions which made him act in things relating to that subject as secretly as he could. But when his fears were terminated, and he found himself at liberty to do what he pleased, he then showed his secret inclinations." <sup>78</sup>

His first pagan manifestation was cleverly calculated. The day when the body of Emperor Constantius was brought to Constantinople, after the funeral services in the Church of the Holy Apostles, "Julian approached the remains, touched the coffin with his hand, then, ordering suitable honors to be paid to the deceased in the name of the tutelary gods of the city, he himself inaugurated the worship of the gods." <sup>79</sup> In this way, on the occasion of the funeral of a Christian Em-

<sup>78</sup> Ammianus, XXII, 5.

<sup>79</sup> Libanius, Orations, 10.

peror, were celebrated the first official pagan sacrifices. Julian reëstablished paganism under such circumstances that a protest by the Christians could hardly have been made.

# Special Trait of Julian's Paganism

Julian's paganism had a special character of its own. His religion was quite a different thing from the national religion of Trajan, Antoninus, Septimius Severus, or Diocletian. His religious thoughts tended to Athens rather than to Rome, to the gods of Homer rather than to the divinities of Latium. It is, indeed, hard to grasp the theology of the Apostate in its fluctuating and elusive outline. But, if we examine closely, we can discern his preferences for four principal divinities: Jupiter, who, Julian considered, personified the infinite power that governs the world; Minerva, who, in his eyes, is the symbol of his beloved Athens; Mars, whose name naturally comes to the lips of an emperor and warrior; and the Sun, the Sun-King. This last he sometimes considers the expression of the divine nature, but usually as the god of those Eastern religions whose mysteries captivated him.

Julian's theology was not merely "a sort of compromise between absolute polytheism and monotheism." <sup>80</sup> It was also a compromise between the religions of nature and the national religions, between philosophical religion and popular religion. Julian liked to quote Plato. Between the supreme Perfection and lower beings he conceived a series of intermediate beings by whom the divine life was poured out and thus gradually lessened. This system was probably suggested to his mind by the Neoplatonic theories. <sup>81</sup>

At the same time he somewhat resembled the masses by his fondness for superstitions, haruspices, and soothsayers. Says

<sup>80</sup> Naville, Julien l'Apostat et sa philosophie du polythéisme, p. 68.

<sup>81</sup> Julian, Orations, 4; St. Cyril, Adversus Julianum, 2.

Libanius: "Upon rising in the morning, his first care was to enter into communion with the gods by means of the victims. By blood he greeted the rising of the god; and with blood he led the god back again at the time of its setting; when the god had disappeared, he immolated to the genii of the night." 82 These practices show the influence of the Mithraic rites, of the crioboly and taurobolium ceremonies. 83 Therein the Apostate not only sought the gratification of his mystical instincts: but through them he tried to efface the indelible character of his baptism. It appears that he made use of special rites and formulas of execration composed for that purpose.84 But it was especially by blood that he sought "to wash away the water of his baptism." 85 We are told by St. Gregory Nazianzen that "Iulian strove also to profane his hands for the purpose of removing every trace of the unbloody sacrifice by which we enter into communion with Christ." 86

# Adaptations from Christianity

By an equally hateful outrage to the Christianity he had deserted, Julian took from the religion of his childhood and sought to utilize in the restoration of his paganism certain formulas and ceremonies, a hierarchical organization, and a method of propaganda.

An imperial decree ordered that the temples be reopened and that everywhere the sacrifices be resumed.<sup>87</sup> But the interior of the temples was at once arranged according to the model offered by the Christian churches. As in the *presby*-

<sup>82</sup> Libanius, Epitaphios Juliani; Ad Julianum consulem (Reiske ed.), I, 391.

<sup>83</sup> On these ceremonies, see Mourret, op. cit., I, 443 f.

<sup>84</sup> Sozomen, V, 2.

<sup>85</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, IV, 52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Ibid. In the early Church, communicants received the Eucharistic bread in their hands.

<sup>87</sup> Ammianus, XXII, 5.

terium of the latter, there were kneeling-benches and stalls for priests, who must there recite the offices at various hours of the day. We have the rescript directing the prefect of Egypt to create a sort of conservatory of sacred music at Alexandria.88 Out of the pagan priest, who was simply the performer of a traditional ceremony, Julian wanted to make a preacher, an apostle, a missioner. He planned a series of dogmatic, moral, and apologetical instructions, for the purpose of explaining the doctrines of pagan Hellenism and having them practiced.89 The whole pagan clergy was organized into a hierarchical system with three grades. The priests of each single locality were placed under the jurisdiction of a municipal pontiff, a sort of archpriest, who was subject to the pontiff of the province. At the head of the whole hierarchy was the pontifex maximus, who was none other than the Emperor himself.90

# Philosophers and Rhetoricians

To give his paganism a dogma, Julian appealed to the chief philosophers and rhetoricians of renown. He invited them to court and admitted them to his intimacy. In their first rank was one of his former teachers, Maximus of Ephesus, with whom he had always kept up correspondence.

But paganism and the governing personnel which Julian endeavored to impose on it did not relish these changes. Soon it was evident that the court philosophers were taking advantage of the imperial favor to obtain lucrative positions. Maximus, laden with honors and wealth, became a kind of chief minister, outshining everyone by his haughty magnificence.<sup>91</sup> The Gallic rhetorician Aprunculus was appointed governor of

<sup>88</sup> Julian, Letter 56 (Hertlein ed., p. 566).

<sup>89</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, IV, 111.

<sup>90</sup> On this organization, see Allard, Julian l'Apostat, II, 179-185.

<sup>91</sup> Eunapius, Vitae Sophistarum; Maximus.

the Narbonnaise; the rhetorician Belee, governor of Arabia. The Sophist Himerius had a position at court. Priscus was attached to Julian's own person and accompanied him on his journeys. Libanius obtained the post of quaestor. This last, thinking to give high praise to Julian, says of him that "he gave eloquent men to the cities as governors." <sup>92</sup> The Emperor's doctrinal reform, in the end, amounted to entrusting statecraft and administration to sophists.

The old pagan clergy were not enthusiastic for the plans of the imperial reformer. The new men he introduced gave him even less satisfaction. St. John Chrysostom gives us a description of them that is not very flattering. "People who formerly were half-dead from hunger, escaped convicts, men who yesterday were barely earning their living at the lowliest trades, all at once became priests or haruspices and were encompassed with the greatest honors." 93 At Antioch might be seen a procession under the Emperor's direction, and in it "effeminate young men and courtesans drawn from their miserable abodes holding most shameless converse." 94 Even Iulian's entourage suffered from his promiscuities and wearied of his superstitious devotions and endless sacrifices. Extensive ridicule, greater than that which accompanied the decay of the old traditional idolatry, hastened the ruin of this restored paganism.

# Shrine of Apollo

Of all the humiliations which the Emperor had to undergo, the one he felt most seems to have been the failure of two desperate attempts he made, about the middle of 362 and the

<sup>92</sup> Libanius, Epitaphios Juliani.

<sup>93</sup> St. Chrysostom, Liber in Sanctum Babylam, chap. 14, in Opera (ed. 1734), II, 668.

<sup>94</sup> Ibidem.

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early part of 363, to revive the worship of Apollo at Daphne and to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem.

In the pagan world there were few sanctuaries whose fame could rival that of the Daphne temple. Connected with the city of Antioch by roads bordered with jessamine and roses and encompassed by a sacred grove of aged cypresses and shady paths, it was, at the gates of the great cosmopolitan city, both a place of worship and a rendezvous of pleasure. "If the gods were to come down to earth," said the ancients, "it is Daphne they would choose for their stay." 95 But ever since the Antioch Christians had built, opposite the temple of Apollo, a church to which they brought the relics of the martyr Babylas, one of their holy bishops, the oracles had not been heard in the famous shrine.96 Julian went to Daphne in the month of August, 362, and there saw only a few pagans celebrating the god's feast. At sight of the well-nigh deserted temple, he felt a bitter pang. Standing at the foot of Apollo's statue he addressed a spirited exhortation to those present. Thenceforth the purpose he followed out with tireless activity was to revive one of the most famous prophetic organs of the Greek world and to restore the splendor of a worship which, he said, had been the glory of Antioch.

But on October 22, "in a serene and cloudless sky," <sup>97</sup> the temple of Daphne caught fire. Some said it was caused by lightning, others said it was started by a spark carried by the wind to the wooden framework. However it may have begun, the fire soon reached the roof. From that point blazing beams fell on the colossal statue of the god. Apollo's image was quickly consumed. The people, notified by the priests of the shrine, rushed out from the city. The Emperor himself came. But, as Libanius relates, "crowds of spectators stood by la-

<sup>95</sup> Libanius, Antiochius.

<sup>96</sup> Sozomen, V, 19; Socrates, III, 18.

<sup>97</sup> Libanius, Monodia super Daphnaei templum.

menting but unable to assist, like those who from land beholding a shipwreck can afford no relief but their tears." 98 Julian blamed the fanaticism of the Christians for the destruction of the shrine. His retaliation was the pillage of the great church of Antioch and the martyrdom of the priest Theodoret. But he did not venture to repeat his attempt to revive the fame of Daphne. "Twenty years later the walls were still standing, as were all the columns except one, which had broken off at its base. The roof alone was lacking. They had not attempted to replace it. We cannot say what Julian was afraid of: whether the Christians or the lightning or the martyr Babylas or the wrath of Apollo." 99

## The Temple at Jerusalem

A few months afterwards, however, Julian made a similar attempt at Jerusalem. He did not manifest for the Jewish people that hatred which the Roman people had avowed toward them and which several emperors shared. He pretended to admire them, not as the nation chosen to spread in the world the idea of one only God and the hope of a Messiah, but as a valiant race watched over, he said, by one of the many gods ruling the universe. We may well suppose he especially valued, among the Jews, some of his best allies in his warfare on Christianity.

He summoned to his presence the principal leaders of the Hebrew nation and said to them: "Why should not you also offer sacrifices to your god for the safety of the Empire?" When they answered that they were not allowed to sacrifice elsewhere than in the Temple at Jerusalem, which was then in ruins, the Emperor replied: "Let not this be a hindrance; I will rebuild it."

<sup>98</sup> Libanius, op. cit.

<sup>99</sup> Allard, Julien l'Apostat, III, 82.

# JULIAN THE APOSTATE (361–363)

In the mind of the Apostate, besides the wish to gratify the Jews, there was a desire to disprove the words of Christ, who said: "There shall not be left here a stone upon a stone that shall not be destroyed." When Julian was setting out for his Persian expedition, he wrote to the Jewish people a long letter in which he said:

"As soon as I have brought the war against the Persians to a successful end, I hope that I may be able to rebuild, by my efforts, the holy city of Jerusalem, which you have founded and for so many years have desired to see and in which, together with you I may pay homage unto the Omnipotent." <sup>100</sup>

The Emperor appointed, as superintendent of the construction, an eminent personage, named Alypius, who had been administrator of Britain. Large sums of money were placed at his disposal. This stupendous undertaking easily stirred popular enthusiasm among the Jewish people. We are told by St. John Chrysostom that "the patriarch of the Jews offered the immense treasures that were deposited with him. And the people set to work with all their resources of daring, initiative, and skill." <sup>101</sup> Says St. Ephrem: "The circumcised were already blowing the trumpet." <sup>102</sup>

The work began. Frequent earthquakes soon hindered its progress, and sudden heavings of the ground and cave-ins gave the workmen unpleasant surprises. The fall of a colonnade crushed a group of excavators. "Despite these disasters the construction went on. Jewish tenacity and pagan persistence seemed to be struggling with raging nature. Presently a more terrible phenomenon occurred." <sup>103</sup> We will let the pagan writer, Ammianus Marcellinus, continue the account. He says:

<sup>100</sup> Matt. 24: If.; Mark 13: If.; Luke 19: 5f.

<sup>101</sup> St. Chrysostom, Contra Judaeos, 16.

<sup>102</sup> St. Ephrem, Hymn against Julian.

<sup>103</sup> Allard, op. cit., III, 143.

"Though Alypius applied himself vigorously to the work, and though the governor of the province coöperated with him, fearful balls of fire burst forth with continual eruptions close to the foundations, burning several of the workmen and making the spot altogether inaccessible. And thus the very elements, as if by some fate, repelling the attempt, it was laid aside." <sup>104</sup>

Twenty-five years later St. John Chrysostom, after reviewing these events, draws the following conclusions: "If you go to Jerusalem, you will see the empty excavations for the foundation of the Temple. And if you ask the reason for it being in that state, you will be told what I have just related. But you will bear in mind that it did not happen under Christion emperors. It took place when our affairs were in a lamentable condition. All freedom had been taken from us, paganism was flourishing. Then burst forth these events to confound the effrontery of our enemies." 105

Assuredly, such prodigies were considered by the Christians as a pledge of providential relief in the midst of their trials. But so many profanations grieved them, and more than once they were unable to restrain the expression of their indignation. At Constantinople one day when Julian was immolating victims at the foot of a statue of Fortune in a consecrated church, a blind old man, led by a child, approached the Emperor and publicly rebuked him as an irreligious man, an atheist, and apostate.

"Thou art blind," Julian said to him. "The Galilean, thy God, will not cure thee." The blind man replied: "I thank God for my blindness, since it prevents me from beholding one who has apostatized from religion."

The Emperor made no further answer and, without retaliating against the courageous interrupter, went on with the

<sup>104</sup> Ammianus, XXIII. I.

<sup>105</sup> St. Chrysostom, Contra Judaeos, V, 11.

sacrifice. This old man was Maris, bishop of Chalcedon, a distinguished Arian and long since a fiery enemy of St. Athanasius. But in his soul heresy had not stifled a deep feeling of respect for sacred things.<sup>106</sup>

# St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen

More profound, active, and effective was the indignation of the orthodox bishops. This we have already noted in the words of St. Gregory Nazianzen. The holy bishop's grief was the more bitter since bonds of intimacy had united him in his youth with the wretched apostate. Julian, while studying under Greek rhetoricians in Athens, was already a pagan by inclination but distrustful of new acquaintances and perhaps tormented by doubt. In the crisis he was then experiencing in his belief, he sought the society of the two young Christians, both of them intelligent and, like himself, very fond of philosophy and literature. The fact that they devoted themselves to the same task and retained a persevering friendship for each other made the names of these two young men inseparable for posterity. They were Basil and Gregory.

Both of them were born in Cappadocia. Basil came of a noble family of Caesarea which reckoned martyrs among its ancestors, and bishops among its members. The head of the family was a brilliant teacher of eloquence in the province of Pontus. Gregory's birthplace was the little town of Arianzus. His saintly mother had married a pagan, but through her prayers and fasting made him a Christian, then a saint, and finally a bishop. Gregory's father, also named Gregory, somewhat late in life received baptism at Nazianzus, and following that was made a bishop.

Basil and the young Gregory, having met first at Caesarea and later at Athens, felt for each other one of those intense

<sup>106</sup> Sozomen, V, 4.

friendships which inflame youth. They possessed different natural dispositions: one austere, the other gentle; one more influenced by the teachings of science, the other more attracted by transports of divine love. But they both had the same earnestness in prayer, the same purity of morals, the same devotion to the memory of home, and, although far secondary to their fondness for Christian studies, the same enthusiasm for literature, poetry, and oratory. At a later date Gregory said: "How can I recall those days without weeping? We knew only two paths: the more cherished one led us to the Church and her doctors; the other, not so lofty a one, led us to the school and our teachers."

Julian, impelled by his eager curiosity, visited the retreat of the two young students. "Before completely breaking away from the faith of his childhood, perhaps he wished to turn one last look upon the depths of the Gospel." <sup>107</sup> They had in common an abundance of subjects for conversation; Gregory could discourse at great length about eloquence and poetry. But soon, in spite of the young prince's effort to hide his deepest feelings from his two friends, the conversation turned to moral and religious questions. This left a painful impression in the souls of Basil and Gregory. "I kept looking at him," the Bishop of Nazianzus wrote later, "and I saw that his head was all the time moving, his shoulders shaking and quivering, his look wandering, his step unsteady, his nose in the air breathing insolence and haughtiness. I said to myself: What monster is Rome nourishing in this man?" <sup>108</sup>

Basil left Athens in 355, at the age of twenty-six. He returned to Cappadocia and there for a while taught rhetoric at Caesarea. Following the advice of his sister Macrina, who was living as an ascetic with her widowed mother and a few companions on a family estate in Pontus, he decided to conse-

<sup>107</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, III, 288-290.

<sup>108</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, V, 23 f.

crate himself to God. Like his friend Gregory, he was as yet not baptized. He received baptism from the hands of Dianius, bishop of Caesarea. His thoughts then turned to the monastic life.

Beginning in 357, for two years he journeyed through Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, studying on the spot the life of the monks and anchorites. Upon returning home, he distributed his goods to the poor and sought a retreat at the gates of Neocaesarea with the idea of henceforth living only for God, in meditation and study. Some Christians of the neighborhood, who were making a trial of the ascetic life, joined him in his hermitage, which was transformed into a real monastery. He left it five years later to fight against Arianism and paganism with unequalled zeal and learning and, after having led the life of Antony in solitude, to take part in the combats of Athanasius against heresy.<sup>109</sup>

His friend Gregory stayed in Athens longer than he did and at first gave lessons in rhetoric. In 360 he returned to Cappadocia, dividing his time between his native Arianzus and Basil's solitude where he made frequent sojourns. Filial love and zeal for orthodoxy induced him only once to leave his life of prayer and labor. In 360 or 361, learning that his aged father had just subscribed to the semi-Arian formula of Rimini, he went to Nazianzus and persuaded him to make a profession of completely Catholic faith. A short time after this, despite his reluctance, he was ordained a priest by his father. He then stayed with him to assist him in the administration of the Church of Nazianzus.

Julian was now Emperor. At times by guile and again with violence, he was waging against the Church that war which Basil and Gregory, when they used to visit the young prince in Athens, felt would come. Julian did not like Cappadocia, where his efforts to establish paganism had not been success-

<sup>109</sup> Allard, Saint Basile.

ful. Vexed by the boldness with which the people of Caesarea greeted his coming by the destruction of a temple, he imposed an enormous fine upon the city and forcibly enrolled its clergy in the police force. The terrified people asked advice and encouragement from their shepherd. The Church of Caesarea was at that time governed by a bishop universally esteemed for his virtues, but a man lacking in decision and meagerly versed in theology. His name was Eusebius. This bishop, seeing his Church in peril, called Basil to him. Basil's vigilance, eloquence, spirit of prudence and firmness saved the cause of the faith in Caesarea.

These first activities of Basil and Gregory in the religious quarrels were only the forerunners of the great battles they would both wage later for the defense of the Catholic religion.

# St. Ephrem

At this same time Syria gave the Church another eloquent defender, the deacon Ephrem. His father was a priest of the former gods of the district. He was born, in the early years of the fourth century, in the city of Nisibis, at the very frontier of Roman power, a city taken and retaken in turn by the Persians and the Romans. Like Basil and Gregory, Ephrem early became enthusiastic for literature and rhetoric. Like them, in his vouth he followed the monastic life in that contemplative form which the East readily gives it. As in the case of Basil, he one day found himself charged with the task of reviving the courage of a city threatened by Julian's anger. It was in 363. The people of Edessa were terrified by the fear of seeing the army of the Romans arrive. Ephrem was a poet. His religious hymns, with their firm and gentle accent, were already popular. For this particular occasion he composed a song, which, when repeated by the people reanimated their courage. 110 The poet says:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., IV, 356-358.

# JULIAN THE APOSTATE (361–363)

"The sound of direful threats I hear,
A voice from out the West;
And groans of grievous torment come
To shake our very breast.

I tremble, God, because with Thee No sinners can abide. But I am filled with joy because For sinners Thou hast died.

Jews, heretics, barbarians,
And pagans in accord,
Your forces join, that I may die
For Christ, my sovereign Lord.

Your deed, atrocious crime 'gainst God, Will make my spirit weep.
But death I'll welcome heartily,
In Christ the Lord I'll sleep." 111

# Death of Julian the Apostate

Julian's army did not come to Edessa. Besides, the tyrant's end was near. June 26, 363, in a battle with the Persians, the Emperor was struck by a spear. The weapon entered his side and penetrated the liver. The wound was fatal. According to certain writers, the Apostate took some of the blood flowing

111 St. Ephrem, op. cit., 123. On St. Ephrem's life and writings, see Duval, La Littérature syriaque, pp. 332-337, and F. Nau, art. "Ephrem" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 188-193. St. Ephrem wrote only in Syriac. Some of his works exist only in Greek translation. The Assemani brothers and Father Morabek, S.J., translated them into Latin; this translation, together with the original texts, they published in six volumes in 1737-1746. St. Ephrem wrote commentaries on the entire Bible. He composed sermons and hymns, which have but little difference between them: the former are doctrinal and controversial; the latter, ascetical and hortatory. Both exalt the Redeemer's divinity, the dignity of the Blessed Virgin, and the holiness of the priesthood. A large number of his poems have been introduced into the liturgy of the Eastern Churches.

from the wound and threw it up into the air, saying: "Galilean, thou hast conquered." 112 According to others, he cried out: "Sun, thou hast cheated me." Ammianus Marcellinus and Libanius say he died with the stoical calmness of the philosopher. 113 But the words attributed to him give the vague impression that "he expired with a clear perception that everything in his work had been artificial, and with a sudden revelation that it was already dead before him." 114 He had wanted to cover a pagan idea with a Catholic form; and he saw his undertaking fail before falling himself. The two friends of his youth, Basil and Gregory, as well versed as he was in the culture of ancient literature and customs, would, on the contrary, seek to clothe a deeply Christian idea with classic beauty; and they will prepare the way for one of the most brilliant epochs in the life of the Church, giving a foretaste of the purest masterpieces of Christian eloquence, poetry, and legislation.

<sup>112</sup> Theodoret, Ecclesiastical History, III, 20 (alias 25); Sozomen, VI, 2.

<sup>113</sup> Ammianus, XXV, 3; Libanius, Epitaphios Juliani.

<sup>114</sup> Allard, Julien l'Apostat, III, 283.

#### CHAPTER VIII

# From the Death of Julian the Apostate to the Coming of Theodosius (363-379)

#### General View of the Period

THE sixteen years between the disastrous reign of Julian the Apostate and the glorious restorative government of Theodosius form a period of transition. After the reigns of Constantius and Julian, the fact is henceforth established that neither Arianism nor paganism, however much favored by the sovereigns, has power to regenerate a dissolving society. A return to the Catholic policy of Constantine seemed the only solution for the political and social crisis disturbing the Empire and the world. But where could a genius be found, capable of resuming the work of the great emperor? And would men be ready to follow him? The four rulers who transmitted or divided the power from 363 to 379—Jovian, Valentinian, Valens, and Valentinian II—pursued a wavering policy. The outstanding glory of their reigns is in the appearance of a few eminent geniuses whose influence, more effectively than any other cause, prepares the way for the clearly Catholic policy of Theodosius. In the East the fame of St. Athanasius, St. Basil, and St. Gregory Nazianzen keeps growing. Along with them we find St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Epiphanius, and St. John Chrysostom. In the West, St. Ambrose and St. Jerome appear with St. Hilary.

Among the barbarous races, two facts are of the greatest interest to the history of the Church in this period. On the one hand, Arianism, forced back beyond the boundaries of the Empire, wins the nations of the Gothic race; on the other hand, a real apostle, St. Martin of Tours, gives new life to orthodox Christianity in Gaul.

It may be that the historic period which is the subject of the present chapter does not claim attention by any impressive and sudden change or by any conspicuous event. But at least, by the worth of the great men it produces and the great events it preludes, it deserves the study of anyone who likes to trace the progress of the life of the Church and the march of civilization in the continuity of their development.

#### Emperor Jovian

Iulian at his death left no natural heir, no successor designated in his will, no instruction of any sort. Under these conditions, says Ammianus, it occurred to no one that the new emperor could be named otherwise than by the soldiers. The higher officers decided that the armed forces commanded by Julian should be entrusted to the oldest of the generals. For the holding of an election, they would wait until these forces were joined by the army left in Mesopotamia. But a group of lower officers, unwilling to wait so long, chose one of their own, Jovian, chief officer of the guards, placed a purple cloak on his shoulders, and paraded him through the legions, while they proclaimed him emperor. It was said that many of the soldiers, misled by the similarity of the two names (Jovian and Julian), thought they were acclaiming the former emperor risen from the dead. The enthusiasm soon spread through the whole army.1

The newly elected at first protested against this unexpected enthronement. "Being a Christian myself," he said, "I cannot govern the troops of Julian." But his eager electors replied: "You will reign over Christians, over those who were brought

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ammianus, XXV, 5.

up in the true religion. The oldest among us were instructed in doctrine by Constantine." <sup>2</sup> In these acclaims there was unconscious but only too real irony. The brave and easy-going old soldier, who put the imperial purple upon his tall and slightly bent body, did not resemble Constantine either in character or physique. The enthusiasm with which he was received was the more significant: in the case of many, it was owing to an aversion for the policy of the deceased emperor rather than to a liking for the person of the newly elected one.

# Emperor Valentinian I

Jovian reigned only a few months. He was succeeded by another military officer, Valentinian, a man who was beloved by the army because he fought bravely in Gaul under Julian, and was liked by the Christians because, like Jovian, he had incurred the temporary displeasure of the Apostate for his loyalty to Christianity. Unfortunately, a month after his election, he associated in his government his brother Valens, who was devoted to the semi-Arians, and he entrusted him with the rule of the East, where dangers of heresy were most formidable. Further, Valentinian did not fulfil all that was expected of him.

Valentinian was a sincere, honorable, chaste man, uncompromisingly devoted to orthodoxy, fond of order and discipline in everything, but exceedingly jealous of his power. He always respected the Church as the organ of truth, but looked upon it with a suspicious eye as a power. The influence of the Church had, indeed, remarkably grown since the Edict of Milan. Constantine could boast of being its protector; Valentinian felt himself protected by it.

Immediately after arranging the division of the Empire, he went to Milan and made that city his capital. He hoped to be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Theodoret, Ecclesiastical History, IV, 1.

in a better position there to watch the invasions of the barbarians from the north. He also thought that from there he could more effectively cure the disorders that had been introduced into that part of the Empire during the eight years of neglect in which the three preceding emperors had left it. But in those eight years a social power had grown little by little, under the influence of the Church, and apparently to the detriment of the imperial authority.

#### The Patricians

Slowly but profoundly "the Roman order of patricians had been won by Christianity. Whether by the influence of example or under the sway of a veritable conviction, old families in their entirety decided to pay homage to the new religion. Once they took this resolution, they were surprised at finding themselves strengthened in an unexpected source of glory and power. Christianity renewed and invigorated their influence. Alms, wisely distributed by the hands of the priests, elicited from poor Christian families a gratitude to their patrician benefactors, a gratitude less servile than that of the common people, but more lasting. Their slaves, gradually emancipated and prepared for freedom by pious training, formed a devoted armed band around them. Soon the influence of the Christian patricians extended beyond Rome. Once they had entered into the most extensive association of men and the only organized society subsisting in the Empire, they found themselves thereby placed at the head of a powerful party.

"Ever since Athanasius, in his days of exile, found asylum in the homes of Roman senators, the practice had developed among Christians of every country, even from the depths of Egypt or Asia, of appealing to illustrious families of the capital whenever they had a church to be built, a monastery to be founded, some ruin to be prevented, or some disaster to be repaired. The alms, which were nearly always given, were abundantly repaid by popularity and gratitude." <sup>3</sup>

Among these noble representatives of the Christian aristocracy, the following are noteworthy: the prefect of the praetorian guard in 365, Sextus Petronius Probus, member of a family in which, so it was said, consulships passed from father to son, and which went back to the time of Marcus Aurelius; his wife, Anicia, who, in the old family palace of the Anicii, centralized the charitable works of the Roman matrons; the prefect of Rome, Olybrius, a close relative of the Julii and Emilii; the noble wife of Toxotius, named Paula, a descendant of the Scipios and the Gracchi and granddaughter of the consul Marcellus; Melania, who, upon a visit to the hermits of Egypt, for three days fed five thousand of them by her alms.<sup>4</sup>

## The Papal See

The churches of Rome, and thereby the Pontifical See, were the first beneficiaries of these generous gifts. We have already seen that, in times of persecution, the Church of Rome, obliged to meet vast expenses, possessed considerable wealth. Eusebius quotes the following from a decree of Constantine:

"We ordain, therefore, that all things whatsoever which shall appear really to belong to the churches (whether the property consist of houses or fields and gardens, or whatever the nature of it may be), shall be restored in their full value and integrity and with undiminished right of possession." <sup>5</sup>

The magnificence of that naturally generous emperor nowhere appeared more glorious than in his liberality to the Church. In

<sup>3</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, V, 23 f.

<sup>4</sup> This was St. Melania the Elder. See Goyau, Sainte Mélanie, p. 22. Cf. Rompolla, The Life of St. Melania.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, II, 39. Cf. chaps. 21, 36, 41; Ecclesiastical History, VIII, 1 f.; X, 5, etc.

all parts of the Empire, but especially in Rome, he built magnificent temples and provided considerable revenue for them. The *Liber pontificalis* contains an amazing list of the offerings made by that ruler to the Roman churches.<sup>6</sup>

The transfer of the imperial capital to Constantinople, to Sirmium, and to Milan, by increasing the tasks of the Roman pontiff, thereby drew to him more abundant resources from devout Christians. "Thereby," says a learned historian, "Rome was left free to the popes, who could now act with greater independence and make the city the base of their operations in far-off lands." <sup>7</sup> The Arian dispute, contrary to the plans of its promoters, merely strengthened this tendency.

"The need of a firm common center during the disorders was strongly expressed by the writers who then undertook to advocate the claims of the Roman See, whilst the measures taken by the popes, in response to the dictates of duty and carried out with a deep sense of responsibility, were eventually crowned with success, and issued in the complete, peaceful, and joyful submission to Rome of the two great halves of the Empire." 8

It is indeed strange that Pope Liberius, the pontiff whose momentary weakness so grieved the Christian world, was the very one in whose person the Roman primacy was most clearly affirmed in this period. But his exile at Beroea and a solemn retractation of his error had expiated his weakness. His return to Rome was acclaimed with the cry: "One God, one Christ, one shepherd." His rival Felix, driven out by public disapproval, died in obscurity in a village of Campania. After Constantius' death, Liberius issued "general decrees" pre-

<sup>6</sup> Liber pontificalis. I, 170-201.

<sup>7</sup> Grisar, History of Rome, I, 322.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid. So true is this that some writers have endeavored to assign to the fourth century the origin of the primacy of the pope. In trying to do this, they must close their eyes to the entire previous development of papal authority.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> These decreta generalia are mentioned by Siricius, Regesta pontificum romanorum (no. 220), I, 34.

scribing the manner of dealing with repentant Arians and semi-Arians and making decisions about baptisms administered by them. In 365, the last year of his life, he received a delegation of sixty Eastern bishops who addressed him as the head of the faith, and he admitted them to the communion of the Catholic Church but, as he himself declares, only after ascertaining the perfect agreement of their confessions of faith with his own and those of all the bishops of the West. A papal epitaph, probably referring to Liberius, peaks of him in enthusiastic terms; so greatly did the glory of the papal office—added to Liberius' personal repentance—make his contemporaries overlook his passing defection.

# Pope St. Damasus

Such was the situation which aroused the jealous susceptibility of Emperor Valentinian. The election of Pope Damasus in 366, at Liberius' death, was not of a sort to reassure the Emperor's distrustful absolutism. Damasus, like his three immediate predecessors (Marcus, Julius, and Liberius), was of Roman parentage, and was already well known through his connections with the Roman aristocracy. Valentinian, by a constitution written with his own hand and addressed to the new pope, forbade the clergy, ascetics and religious to visit houses of widows or of persons under guardianship, to receive gifts from them, even as bequests or deathbed donations. All donations, legacies, and trusts of this kind were declared null and void, and the property legally accrued to the imperial treasury. As though to show that these provisions did not

<sup>10</sup> Socrates, IV, 12; Jaffé (no. 228), I, 35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See the epitaph and Duchesne's note in favor of the attribution to Liberius, in the *Liber pontificalis*, I, 209 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The Liber pontificalis (see I, 213, note 1), which calls him a Spaniard, seems incorrect on this point.

<sup>13</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, II, 2.

imply a spirit of hostility to the Holy See, the Emperor at the same time promulgated a second constitution, ordering that all religious cases be henceforth submitted to the judgment of the bishop of Rome, even those in which other bishops should be involved, and all secular judges were forbidden to take part therein.

# Valentinian's Religious Policy

All of Valentinian's legislation bore traces of the twofold tendency of his spirit, which was both absolutist and conscientious. These traces are to be seen in his interventions against paganism and against Western Arianism, in his civil legislation, and in his attitude toward the Ursinian schism.

He took from the pagan temples the property which Julian the Apostate had granted them. But he was careful not to let it revert to the Christian churches. He strictly forbade idolatrous sacrifices suspected of immorality. But he did not abolish the popular feasts and ceremonies and he was cautious in the matter of the famous mysteries of Greece.<sup>14</sup>

In Italy and Gaul a few strict Arians still clung to their errors. Auxentius, the bishop of Milan, became conspicuous by his clever intrigues. Valentinian, when he came to Milan in November 364, at once ordered the quaestor and the master of requests, assisted by ten bishops, to make an investigation. At the close of the inquiry, Auxentius, in the Emperor's presence, declared that he acknowledged Christ as truly God, as having the same divinity and substance as God the Father. The Bishop, however, when required to put the declaration in writing, did so in a formula plainly ambiguous. But the Emperor, as though fearful of giving too much gratification to the Catholics, announced he was satisfied with it.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., X, 1, 2; VIII, VIII, 1; IX, III, 3, 4; IX, XL, 8; Zosimus, IV, 3.

<sup>15</sup> The formula subscribed to by Auxentius was the following: Christum ante omnia saecula et ante omne principium natum ex Patre Deum verum filium ex Deo

"The introduction of Christian principles into the laws, although really dating from Constantine, did not clearly appear until the time of Valentinian." 16 As instances of measures wholly inspired by Christianity, we cite the following: the appointment of physicians at government expense for the poor in the large cities; the curbing of excessive demands by lawyers, by landowners upon farm-tenants, and by the Treasury upon tax-payers; 17 the right granted all cities to convene an assembly at regular intervals for deliberation concerning grievances to be addressed to the sovereign; 18 and the official establishment of a defensor civitatis (defender of the city), a sort of tribune of the people, whose duty it was to uphold local liberties against administrative tyranny. 19 But Valentinian's fiscal legislation, containing no less than twenty-eight different constitutions designed to secure the claims of the Treasury against individuals, was marked by a severity that at times provoked outcries of misery and despair from the over-taxed people.

#### The Ursinian Schism

Valentinian expressed great respect for the Sovereign Pontiff. But in the schism that sprang up in Rome after the death of Pope Liberius and the election of Damasus, there was a lack of steadiness and firmness in his attitude. Whereas the large majority of the clergy and faithful, assembled in the Basilica of St. Lawrence in Lucina, acclaimed Damasus as

Patre. According as we place a comma before or after the word "verum," the meaning is Arian or Catholic. Cf. St. Hilary, Adversus Auxentium, 7.

<sup>16</sup> Dufourcq, L'Avenir du christianisme, IV, 84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Theodosian Code, XI, 1, 14; x, 1; I, VII, 3, 4; X, x, 9, 10; VIII, XIII, 3-6; XIII, VI, 7; x, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., XII, XII, 3, 4, 6.

<sup>19</sup> We find mention of the defensor civitatis for the first time in 365. On the origin and duties of this new office, destined to play an important part later, see Abel Desjardins, art. "Defensor civitatis" in Daremberg and Saglio's Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines, vol. II, part 1, pp. 47 f.

pope, a group of the people, led by seven priests and three deacons in the Basilica of Julius, elected one of the latter, Ursinus. No fault could be found with the private life of Damasus, whose superior virtue and intelligence were obvious to everyone. But a charge was made that, in the preceding pontificate, his attitude had been hesitant, since for a while he joined the party of Felix, Liberius' rival. The electors of Ursinus represented a faction of extreme, rigid Christians who were unwilling to condone any yielding or hesitation in discipline or doctrine and who maintained that the least of these faults rendered any ecclesiastical election null and void.

Valentinian wanted to keep a neutral position between the two parties. But sanguinary strifes broke out between the Ursinians and the Damasians. Viventius, the prefect of Rome, after verifying the regularity of Damasus' election, expelled Ursinus and the two deacons who sustained him. As the seven priests who remained at the head of the party continued to hold their schismatic meetings, Damasus appealed to the Emperor. The latter ordered them to be arrested and expelled from the city. The sequel showed the necessity for this appeal and for the Emperor's action. Toward the end of 366, on the pretext of neutrality, Valentinian allowed Ursinus to return to Rome. The disturbances began once more and were ended only when Ursinus was again expelled.

# Valens' Policy in the East

Meanwhile Valentinian was at no pains to have the action of his brother Valens coincide with his own. Therefore the policy in the East followed a different course from that in the West.

Valens, at the time of his brother's elevation, held a minor post in the imperial treasury department. Contemporary historians praise the sincerity of his Christian faith, the austerity of his life, and his simplicity of manners, a trait which he kept under the purple. But he possessed none of the gifts which recommend a leader to the populace. Julian had been a man of letters; Constantius, a warrior; the mere appearance of the great Constantine fascinated the crowds. But Valens hardly understood Greek; the simple rumor of a distant military expedition made him turn pale. He was a short man of dark complexion, with an unpleasant looking film over one eye. He possessed neither a spirit of justice nor firmness of character.

# Bishop Eudoxius

At the outset of his reign his religious policy was dominated by Eudoxius, the usurping bishop of Constantinople, who was an unscrupulous schemer and had adopted all the shades of Arianism one after the other according as they were able to serve his ambition. Eudoxius was a native of Lesser Armenia. the son of one Caesarius who, we are told by Philostorgius, after a dissolute life won the palm of martyrdom under Diocletian.<sup>20</sup> He called himself a disciple of Lucian of Antioch. He took part in the Council of the Dedication, in the Councils of Sardica and Sirmium, in short, in most of the assemblies or conventicles of that time. Therein, according to his interests at the moment, he had maintained semi-Arianism and Anomoeism. At Constantinople, in 360, he was the most active plotter of the intrigues which led to the simultaneous rejection of the homoousios of Nicaea, the homoiousios of Basil of Ancyra, and the anomoios of Eunomius, by proclaiming simply, in a vague formula, that the Son is like (homoios) the Father. This ambiguous system was called homoiism or Eudoxianism. In this plausible but deceptive form Arianism would find its way among the barbarous nations.

Eudoxius was supposed to be a great peace-maker. Bishop

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Philostorgius, Ecclesiastical History, IV, 4.

Macedonius of Constantinople had just died. The see of the Eastern capital was the reward of Eudoxius' so-called services to the cause of good order and of the Empire. St. Hilary of Poitiers and the historian Socrates relate a few details of his insolent triumph. His first sermons from the episcopal pulpit were those of a stage-player rather than a bishop. He said: "God the Father has a Son, you say? You must, then, find a mother for Him also." <sup>21</sup> And again: "God the Son can be pious and reverential since He has His Father to revere. But the Father must be impious and irreverential. Whom can He revere?" The populace laughed at this sarcasm. Arius, in his drinking songs, was not coarser.

Such was the man who acquired an all-powerful influence over Emperor Valens. He it was who baptized Valens in 366 or 367 before the Emperor's expedition against the Goths. It was owing to him that a prohibition was issued against the holding of a great council which the semi-Arians of Asia, reconciled with Pope Liberius and the Nicene faith, planned to convene at Tarsus in 367. He did his utmost to prevent the Emperor from seeing Eunomius. When the Acacians, "jealous of his influence, wanted to complain of him to Valens, the latter refused to listen to them and curtly referred them to Eudoxius himself." <sup>22</sup> Meanwhile the Bishop of Constantinople was working to fill the episcopal sees of the East with his friends.

## St. Athanasius

Eudoxius' hatred could not forget Athanasius. After the coming of Jovian, the Patriarch of Alexandria was officially authorized to resume possession of his episcopal see, and he was governing his diocese peaceably when, on May 5, 365,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Nam si Filius, necesse est ut et femina sit, et colloquium," etc. St. Hilary, Adversus Constantium, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Jugie, art. "Eudoxe" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 1486,

there appeared an edict of Valens banishing all the bishops deposed by Constantius and recalled by Julian. Athanasius was included in this measure. But the people of Alexandria tumultuously assembled, demanding that their bishop be left undisturbed. Athanasius himself, on October 5, probably forewarned of the plot being hatched, left the city. That same night the prefect of the city made an unsuccessful search for him to send him into exile. Athanasius remained in hiding somewhere in the country near Alexandria for four months. Soon popular demonstrations in his behalf assumed such proportions that Valens feared an uprising and gave orders that the Patriarch was not to be molested. Athanasius then returned to Alexandria, "henceforth too great to be persecuted or protected by the Empire." The few incidents which troubled the remaining years of his life were unimportant.

He was Pope Damasus' most faithful support and wisest counsellor. His old comrade in arms, Marcellus of Ancyra, sent a delegation to him, submitting his profession of faith. It was on Athanasius that St. Basil relied in beginning his glorious campaign against the new forms of heresy. "At length this man against whom so many powers had been invoked, this bishop who had spent so many years in exile, often amid the greatest dangers, died in his bed, according to the naïve expression of the Roman Martyrology, in the year 373, on the second of May." <sup>23</sup> Eudoxius died three years earlier, in the spring of 370.

### St. Aphraates

If we are to accept Theodoret's account, the dominating influence of a simple monk made the tyrant's audacity halt. One day Valens, looking down from his balcony, saw the holy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Le Bachelet, in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 2153.

monk Aphraates pass by. Old age made Aphraates' step slow, and his shoulders were stooped beneath a cloak of coarse material.

"The Emperor then said to him, 'Where are you going?' Aphraates with great wisdom replied, 'I am going to pray for the preservation of your empire.' 'But you ought,' said the Emperor, 'to remain at home, and to pray according to the monastic rules.' To this the holy man replied, 'Your observation, O Emperor, is just; and, indeed, while the flock of Christ remained at peace, I pursued the line of conduct which you recommend. But now that the flock is involved in so many perils from the attacks of wild beasts, I am compelled to use every effort for the rescue of the sheep. . . . I am running to extinguish the flames which you have kindled in my Father's house.' While he made these statements, the Emperor remained silent." <sup>24</sup>

## Decree against the Monks

When under the sway of Eudoxius' suggestion, Valens knew no scruples of conscience. An imperial decree was published forbidding any government employee to embrace the eremitical life, unless he surrendered his possessions to the curia. The edict also directed imperial officers to "bring back to the civil life by force those who had left it out of laziness and had fled to the desert." <sup>25</sup> Such legal prescriptions were open to most arbitrary and mischievous interpretations, which were brutally applied to the Eastern monks and led to their expulsion. "Lucius the Arian with a considerable body of troops . . . drove them out of the oratories by force. Rufinus declares that he was not only a witness of these cruelties, but also one of the sufferers." <sup>26</sup> After the monks, the simple faithful were persecuted.

<sup>24</sup> Theodoret, IV, 23 (alias 26).

<sup>25</sup> Theodosian Code, XII, 1, 63.

<sup>26</sup> Socrates, IV, 24.

"The Emperor having issued an edict commanding that the orthodox should be expelled both from Alexandria and the rest of Egypt, depopulation and ruin to an immense extent immediately followed: some were dragged before the tribunals, others cast into prison, and many tortured in various ways." <sup>27</sup>

Frequently these measures produced unexpected results. At Edessa a bishop appointed by the Arians in place of St. Barses vainly called upon the imperial police. He failed to draw the people to his communion.<sup>28</sup> The populace of Samosata compelled two usurpers, one after the other, to leave the city.<sup>29</sup> In Caesarea, when the prefect Eusebius brought the bishop, Basil, before his tribunal, the people rose up. The men from the small-arms factory and from the imperial weaving-sheds demanded their bishop in a threatening manner. We are told by St. Gregory Nazianzen that women brandished their spindles like spears, crying out: "Death to the prefect! Choke him!" Eusebius in terror released the bishop, quit the city, and never set foot in it again.<sup>30</sup>

The Emperor and the Arian bishops who advised him were the more annoyed by such energetic resistance because the political situation in the East was seriously complicated. In 376 the Goths, being driven on by the Huns, obtained asylum within the Empire. But Valens' government treated them with so little humaneness that they rebelled. A regular war had to be waged against them. Valens, before setting out to repel the barbarian peril, wanted to avert by clemency the dangers he thought might arise from the Catholic population. He revoked all the sentences of banishment issued against ecclesiastical persons.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>28</sup> Theodoret, IV, 15 (alias 17).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., chap. 13 (alias 15).

<sup>30</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, XLIII, 57.

<sup>31</sup> Rufinus, Ecclesiastical History, II, 13.

# Emperor Gratian

In the West, Gratian succeeded his father Valentinian, who died in battle on August 9, 375. The new emperor frankly took the side of orthodox Christianity. Zosimus relates that when Gratian, after his elevation to the Empire, was presented with the insignia of the sovereign pontificate by the flamen, contrary to what his predecessors had done, he would not accept them because he thought such an office was not suitable for a Christian.<sup>32</sup> From the vestals and the old pagan priests he took their privileges and estates. He appeared no less unfriendly to the Arian heresy than to paganism. After the tragic death of Valens in the battle of Adrianople in 378, it might well have seemed that the cause of Arianism was forever lost.

#### **Eunomius**

The two primitive forms of Arianism—the unmodified doctrine of Arius and the fluctuating theories enunciated by the Eusebian party—were effectively and finally destroyed. But Eunomius renewed the sect's spirit and methods.

He furnishes a remarkable example of the seduction that can be exercised, under an ugly exterior, by a man of brilliant and cultured mind. He was of peasant stock, awkward, and deformed; his face was disfigured by a sort of leprosy.<sup>33</sup> But when he quoted Plato's harmonious phrases or explained the mystical fancies of Plotinus, he acquired an incredible prestige. Julian the Apostate made Hellenism stylish; and Eunomius profited by this new vogue. From his lips and those of his chief adepts, Aetius and Asterius, people did not hear, as in

<sup>32</sup> Zosimus, IV, 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> "Interius exteriusque morbo regio laborabat." Rufinus, I, 25. On the morbus regius, see Du Cange, under the word "morbus."

the time of Arius, these blasphemies: "The Word is a creature; there was a time when the Son was not." They did not search the Scripture for every expression that seemed to lessen Christ; they did not purposely confuse what referred to God with what referred to man; they did not make a great ado over some figurative expressions so as to contradict the clearest and most decisive passages.

The new doctors of heresy succeeded in seizing upon the literary class by flattering the taste of that light-minded society for elegant discussions.<sup>34</sup> Plato, in his Phedra, calls the First Principle of things the "Unbegotten" or the "Innascible" (ἀγέννητος). This word came into favor. The literary circles doted on it. It was used in preference to the word "God," which, they said, was too gross and ordinary. The Agennetos was the divinity of superior, delicate minds. The clever and subtle Eunomius, when he had accomplished this first result, argued thus: "Innascibility is the special characteristic of God. From this let us not hastily conclude that the Son is not God, since He is begotten by the Father. This reasoning could be used formerly. But it is clumsy and crude; because someone might reply that the Son is begotten as a person, not as divine substance. This reply, however, is no longer possible if we show that the Son is begotten even as to His substance. And such is the profound thought of the mighty Plato." After reaching this point, Eunomius, according to St. Basil's expression, "confounded them with sayings of the great Plato." "If the notion of the Unbegotten is the definition of God," he said, "it is identical with God. Hence God cannot, from any point of view, personal or substantial, be begotten. Therefore the Son is not strictly God. The homoousios contains a contradiction. Plato has triumphed over the Council of Nicaea." 85

<sup>84</sup> Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, III, 217 f.

 $<sup>^{85}</sup>$  Régnon, op. cit., III, 223. Eunomius' theories were set forth in his Apologetica; P. G., XXIX, 497 ff.

# The Cappadocian School

The most dangerous errors are those which, first attacking the heights, are not set forth in popular formulas until they have been clothed with the prestige of scholarship. Eunomius' reasoning might have reconquered, especially in the East, the ground lost by the propaganda of Arius and Eusebius, if God had not then raised up men who were able, by their philosophical and literary learning, to command the admiration of the most cultured minds. At the head of these new defenders of the faith were the three friends who are spoken of as the "Cappadocian doctors." <sup>36</sup> They are St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and St. Gregory of Nyssa.

Between the School of Alexandria, which gave the Church St. Athanasius, and the School of Antioch, which would give her St. John Chrysostom, the School of Cappadocia formed a sort of via media, less inclined to allegorical interpretations than the former, and less confined to literal interpretations than the latter. The three great Cappadocian doctors would bring to the conflict, each the traits of his own originality. With Basil, philosophy and rhetoric are always subordinate to the spirit of government and to action; with Gregory Nazianzen, a theologian of wonderful clearness and exactness, but with a brilliant imagination and tender heart, everything is prompted by a poetic inspiration; with Gregory of Nyssa, who was first of all a philosopher, the dominant quality is a spirited dialectic faculty.

### St. Basil the Great

The man to whom posterity gave the name of Basil the Great,<sup>37</sup> was a great theologian, a great orator, a great organizer of the monastic life, and a great bishop.

<sup>86</sup> Régnon, op. cit., p. 219.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> St. Basil is the only one of the Greek Fathers on whom this title of Great has been bestowed.

Of all the doctrinal writings which St. Gregory Nazianzen and St. Augustine attribute to the illustrious Cappadocian, there remain only the work *Against Eunomius*, which St. Basil published in 364 while he was assisting the bishop of Caesarea, and the work *On the Holy Ghost*, published eleven years later, when he was a bishop.

Against the outrageous blasphemies of Arius and the intrigues of Eusebius of Nicomedia, divine Providence had raised up Athanasius: against the crafty sophisms of Eunomius and Aetius, He raised up Basil. "Athanasius is the type of militant earnestness. Being exiled over and over again, and always returning to his post, he wrote books that filled the world. . . . His eloquence was popular. His beautiful Greek style is clear and without affectation. His style is somewhat prolix, because his first aim is to be understood. His method is to pursue, one by one, all the false or captious formulas. The Scripture passages so endlessly repeated by the Arians, he turns over and over in every direction. But he repeatedly comes back to the texts that clearly affirm the divinity, eternity, and consubstantiality of the Word. . . . You might call him a knight who drives his horse into the midst of a savage band, strikes all about him with his cudgel, and pursues those in flight, or who takes his stand against a rock, and, if pressed too hard, escapes in a long bound, but only to enter into the thickest of the fray." 38

Basil, ever at his post in Caesarea, at first as a priest, then as bishop, "is calmer, more didactic. He manages his discourse artfully and with method. He avoids considerations that are debatable so as to confine himself to unanswerable arguments. He purposes, not so much to set forth the splendors of the faith, as to maintain its purity intact. Yet, when he needs to, he makes use of the erudition acquired in Athens. . . . He learned all the secrets of his language, and drew from rhetoric

<sup>88</sup> Régnon, op. cit., III, 29, 218.

an eloquence that breathed fire. He excelled in argumentation, so that it would be easier to make one's way out of a labyrinth than to escape from the network of his arguments. As to geometry, astronomy, and the science of numbers, he learned what was necessary so as to have nothing to fear from the objections of men versed in those special studies. But his aim was the synthesis of the various branches of knowledge rather than the discovery of the unknown. His mind was powerful, broad, though serious and conservative." <sup>39</sup>

#### St. Basil's Contra Eunomium

In his argumentation against Eunomius, Basil recalls the discussion to the formal point at issue. He shows that in no way can the word "Unbegotten" (Agennetos) mean the very substance of God, embracing it as a perfect definition would. To identify the form of the concept with that of the known object is an error of Plato. 40 Basil remarks that, in one and the same object, reason distinguishes different things. Jesus is called the door, the way, the bread, the vine. We call God "unbegotten," as we call Him immortal, incorruptible, according to the aspects under which we are considering Him. Why should we cling to the first of these words by identifying it with the very substance of God? 41 Eunomius' error was the more serious since it applied his false theory about knowledge to the Divinity. What overweening pretense it is to suppose we comprehend God as He is, because our mind has the concept of one of His attributes! As opposed to this presumptuous rationalism, Basil shows that, although God's action reaches down to us, His Being remains inaccessible to us. "The cre-

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-30.

<sup>40</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas (Summa theologica, I, q. 84, art. 1) says: "It seems that Plato strayed from the truth because he thought that the form of the thing known must of necessity be in the knower in the same manner as in the thing known."

<sup>41</sup> St. Basil, Contra Eunomium, I, 7.

ated world," he says, "makes us know the Creator's power and wisdom, but not His essence. Even the Creator's power is not necessarily revealed in its fulness. It may be that the arm of the divine Artist does not display its full power. . . In any event, Eunomius' dilemma cannot bind us. He says that, if we do not know God's essence, we know nothing of Him. It is an easy matter to refute such a fallacy. If knowledge is not true unless it is full comprehension, what would we know even about finite things, which elude us in so many of their aspects? And yet we are dealing with the Infinite. To know the divine essence is first of all to know the unknowableness of God." <sup>42</sup>

# St. Basil's On the Holy Ghost

The treatise On the Holy Ghost is a writing for a special purpose, but, for the history of dogma, it has great importance. Basil had been blamed for speaking in ambiguous terms of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. He said, for example, that "the Holy Ghost comes from God by the Son," that "the royal Majesty descends from the Father by the only Son, to the Holy Ghost." Basil maintains these expressions and holds that they are as orthodox as those of the Latins. The latter prefer to say that the Holy Ghost comes from the Father and from the Son, or that the divine Substance terminates in the three Persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This, says Basil, is a question of words, or rather of points of view. The Latins, directly contemplating God in His eternal Substance, consider it as effused in three Persons; the Greeks, first contemplating the three Persons, equally in possession of the divine Substance in its entirety, seek then to see the order by which this Substance is communicated integrally from the Father to the Son, then to the Holy Ghost. 43 And these lofty

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., II, 32; Epistolae, 233, 234.

<sup>43</sup> The Latins used the triangle to symbolize the Trinity. The Greek symbol, or, as modern scientific terminology would put it, "the schematic figure" of the Greeks,

metaphysical considerations are presented by the great doctor with confidence and an abundance of wonderful expressions. "We feel ourselves," says Duke de Broglie, "borne upon the open sea of philosophy. Platonism, Aristotelianism, Alexandrian eclecticism are familiar to the author's mind. He repeatedly borrows from them ideas, explanations, and definitions. By his luminous clarity of diction, his happy choice of expressions, and his wealth of comparisons, we perceive that this philosopher is a popularizer." <sup>44</sup>

#### The Hexameron

It has been said that St. Basil was the first orator that the Church reckoned. "Athanasius harangued the soldiers of the faith like a general making an assault. Origen taught doctrine to disciples. Basil was the first to speak at every moment and to all kinds of men a language both natural and learned, with an eloquence which simplicity or strength never diminished." <sup>45</sup> From this point of view it is interesting to consider him instructing the poor people of Caesarea and lifting their minds and hearts to God by the contemplation of nature. This is the subject of the homilies that are called the *Hexameron*, <sup>46</sup> because in them he explains the wonders of the seven days of creation. "If at times," says the eloquent preacher, "in the calmness of the night, raising attentive eyes to the inexpressible beauty of the stars, you have thought of the Creator of

was a straight line. The divine movement, arising from the Father to constitute the Son, drew the Son to constitute the Holy Ghost. See Régnon, op. cit., I, 339 f.

<sup>44</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, IV, 230. Cf. Nager, Die trinitätslehre des heil. Basilius. Nager defends the Bishop of Caesarea from the charge of neonicenism made against him by certain German writers. Neonicenism is a product of the imagination of certain Rationalist historians; it never existed in history. St. Basil always appeared as the defender of the Nicene "consubstantial," both of the word and of the fact. Harnack, to maintain the contrary view, had to rely on an apocryphal document.

<sup>45</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 90.

<sup>46</sup> P. G., XXIX, 3 ff.

all things; if sometimes, during the day, you have studied the marvels of light; come, let me lead you through the wonders of the universe." Then, after a glowing description of the beauties of the earth, he says: "If things visible are so beautiful, what must be the invisible? This perishable but beautiful sun is an object of inexhaustible admiration for us. What, then, must be the Sun of divine justice in all its beauty?" Another time, after describing the wonders of the ocean, he continues thus: "If such is the beauty of the ocean, with its roaring and mounting waves, how much more beautiful is the movement of this Christian gathering where the voices of men, women, and children, mingled together and reëchoing, rise in prayer to God."

At other times the tone of his eloquence recalls the meditative solitary whose soul was trained in the monasteries. He says: "You sleep. Time is slipping by. You awaken and meditate, and life still escapes you. We are seized by an irresistible force. You pass in front of all things, and you leave all things behind. Along the way you have seen trees, fields, watercourses. For a moment you were charmed, and then you went on. You stumbled over stones, were halted by cliffs, fell over precipices, and found yourself encompassed by wild beasts and venomous reptiles. You suffered, and then all this, too, you left behind. Such is life. Neither its pleasures nor its pains are lasting."

### St. Basil and Monasticism

The man who spoke thus had lived a deep mystical life and his keenest desire was to make the greatest possible number of souls profit from it. To this purpose, when he was in Caesarea he published his two collections of monastic rules, drawn up, at least in part, in his monastery on the bank of the Iris.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> On the authenticity of these two collections, see Allard, art. "Basile" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, II, 446. They have been republished in P. G., XXXI, 889-1506.

Both collections are the development of a letter which Basil wrote to his friend Gregory Nazianzen. In this letter he describes the life which he and his companions followed in their retreat in Pontus.<sup>48</sup> The rules he gives were first practiced by himself. He also draws inspiration, in his directions, from what he saw in his Egyptian journeys.

For Basil the ideal of the monastic life is to be found neither in those vast colonies of monks that he visited in Upper Egypt nor in those isolated huts of anchorites that he met with in the desert. In the former he found too much activity and noise. In the latter, as he remarks, there was not sufficient occasion to practice charity and humility. "If you live cut off from men," he says, "how can you rejoice with the joyful and weep with the afflicted? . . . Our Lord washed the feet of His Apostles: if you are a hermit, whose feet will you wash? How will you train yourself in humility if you have nobody before whom to humble yourself?" Basil wishes that souls, prompted by a desire to consecrate themselves to God, should gather in a monastery of moderate size, where the superior could be in continued contact with each brother. Each one would choose a trade, but of a sort that does not disturb the peace of the religious life. And manual labor would be interrupted by so many prayers that it could not make the monks lose the interior spirit.

They are to rise at daybreak to praise God by prayer and the singing of hymns. They will read the Holy Books and will preserve the memory of the holy persons of the Bible, whom they will contemplate "as living statues and animated images." Prayer and study will each have its turn. Silence will not be imposed in an absolute way, but useless talking will be avoided. Before speaking they will reflect and will govern even the tone of voice, which should be neither too low nor too shrill. When embracing the religious life, they will not strip

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> P. G., XXXII, 223-233.

themselves of their possessions, but will henceforth consider them as consecrated to God and will employ them only in good works, either by their own hands or by carefully chosen agents.

Such are the salient provisions of the Basilian rule. "We are particularly impressed by its moderation and wisdom. It leaves to the superiors the determination of the countless details of the local, individual, and daily life. But, while avoiding inflexible prescriptions, the lawmaker gently approaches the monk and so well entwines him in all the varied circumstances of his existence, as finally to place and keep him under the divine yoke." <sup>49</sup>

## St. Basil as Bishop

The same prudence and firmness are to be noted in St. Basil's government. In 370, after the death of Bishop Eusebius, the people and clergy elected him, in spite of the unsettled state of his health, and after vigorous opposition on his part, to the important see of Caesarea. Its jurisdiction at that time extended over fifty suffragans, divided into eleven provinces. St. Gregory Nazianzen has left us a few descriptive details of his friend. He tells us that Basil "was a man of frail health, made thin by fasting and pale from vigils, having hardly any flesh or blood." <sup>50</sup> A manuscript in the Vatican Library, quoted by Baronius, furnishes a more precise description. It says he was tall, thin, wearing a full beard, his head half bald, his temples slightly sunken, his look pensive. <sup>51</sup> His speech was

<sup>49</sup> Besse, Les Moines d'Occident antérieurs au concile de Chalcédoine, pp. 90 f. It is hard to say to what extent the Basilian liturgy, still used on certain days in all the Eastern patriarchates, is the work of St. Basil. From St. Gregory Nazianzen we know that when St. Basil was at Caesarea he regulated "the order of prayers." (Orations, XLIII, 34.) The liturgy of St. Basil is to be found in P. G., XXXI, 1630–1684. Cf. Duchesne, Christian Worship, p. 72.

<sup>50</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Letters 42, 44; Orations, XLIII, 77.

<sup>51</sup> Baronius, Annales, year 378.

slow. This slowness he himself attributed to Cappadocian awkwardness.<sup>52</sup> His enemy Eunomius says that Basil trembled every time anyone entered the room where he shut himself in to work.<sup>53</sup> Philostorgius relates that Basil shrunk from public discussions.<sup>54</sup> The truth is that Basil "was one of those men who show intrepid courage when they feel morally obliged to act, but who, without some imperative duty, do not emerge from the retreat which is their delight." 55 Such men sometimes appear shy and incapable to superficial observers. But their action, prompted solely by the sense of duty or zeal, and not by an instinctive need for activity and noise, is the more effective and profound. So, too, old Bishop Gregory of Nazianzus, father of the illustrious doctor of the same name, at the time of Basil's election, wrote to the bishops who objected on the score of Basil's poor health: "What you need is not an athlete, but a doctor of the faith." 56

The strife against Arianism, the defense of his see of Cappadocia against encroachments that he thought harmful to the welfare of souls, and the practice of works of mercy on behalf of his people, were the chief concerns of his episcopacy.

### Strife with Arianism

St. Gregory Nazianzen records the dialogue between the Bishop and the prefect of Cappadocia who wanted Basil to yield to the religious whims of his master, Valens.

"What reason have you," said the prefect, "for alone resisting so great an emperor?"

"The Emperor is great, but he is not above God."

"Do you not know what torments I can inflict on you?"

<sup>52</sup> St. Basil, Letter 48.

<sup>53</sup> St. Gregory of Nyssa, Contra Eunomium, no. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Philostorgius, Ecclesiastical History, IV, 12.

<sup>55</sup> Allard, Saint Basile, p. 154.

<sup>56</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 43.

"What sort of torments? Explain what you mean."

"I can inflict confiscation, exile, torture, death."

"Confiscation? Do so, if you want to lay hands on the few worn-out vestments and the few books that constitute my entire wealth. Exile? Why should I be afraid of that? Wherever a Christian may be, he considers himself a pilgrim and knows that the whole earth is God's. Torture at the very first stroke will ruin my body, which is so weak. And death will but hasten my return to God, to whom I yearn to go."

"Never before has anyone spoken to me with such unrestraint." "Perhaps," Basil replied, "you have never before met a bishop." <sup>57</sup>

#### Defense of his See

In defending the rights of his episcopal see, Basil found that he was facing not only the imperial power, but the opposition of a covetous, scheming prelate. In 371 Valens, for financial reasons, divided Cappadocia into two provinces and chose the city of Tyana as the capital of the second Cappadocia. But the see of Tyana was then occupied by an old bishop, Anthimus, who had formerly given evidence of devotion to the orthodox faith at Basil's side, but who was quickly dazzled by the splendor of his new situation. He wished to replace Basil as metropolitan of the whole former province. Certain malcontents, more or less secret foes of the Bishop of Caesarea, rallied to Anthimus' side. The new party even enlisted some real bandits. One day when Basil and his friend Gregory were crossing a narrow pass, followed by a caravan of mules laden with various provisions, they were attacked by an armed band that was directed by Anthimus in person. Basil and even the timid and peaceful Gregory had to take part in the fight.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Idem, Orations, XLIII, 48-51.

To ward off attacks upon him, Basil thought it well to make the town of Sasima a bishopric. This town, only a short distance from Caesarea, commanded the various roads by which the tributes due the see of Caesarea reached him.<sup>58</sup> He entrusted this bishopric to his faithful friend Gregory, who almost in spite of himself was consecrated bishop by Basil. Gregory was a delicate and contemplative soul, preferring silence and solitude to everything else. He received the priesthood only out of regard for his father's wishes. We can picture him suddenly placed, like an outpost sentry, where he would daily have to contend against the hordes in Anthimus' service. He soon felt that such a mission was beyond his strength. A yearning for solitude overcame him. He fled to the desert and left it only upon the urging of Basil and his own venerable father. He then returned to his father's house in Nazianzus. "Alas," he said, "can I never realize my longing: to cross the ocean of life in a little boat, to build myself a little house on this earth before I depart for eternity?" 59 A compromise was finally concluded between Basil and Anthimus. The details of it are not known. But various texts lead us to suppose that, out of love for peace, the Bishop of Caesarea gave up to the usurper all or part of his rights in the second Cappadocia. 60

## Works of Mercy

Though less sensitive than Gregory, Basil had a tender heart. "At that period, when political disturbances were frequent and when citizens often remained exposed to the whims

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> At that period there was nothing like regular appropriations for public worship. The churches, with their personnel of priests, clerics, and widows, and their various works of charity, could meet their expenses only by the income from their property, let out to farmers or placed in charge of managers.

<sup>59</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, X, I.

<sup>60</sup> St. Basil, Letters 97, 98, 102.

of officials without supervision or control, the councils laid upon bishops the duty of intervening in behalf of the lowly, the weak, people unjustly accused, and all victims of arbitrary rule or tyranny. To this duty Basil devoted himself wholeheartedly. Part of his correspondence is concerned with these matters of charity. For the purpose he activated his friends who were in the highest posts. Many are his letters asking for exemptions from taxes, rents, and other burdens on behalf of poor people, even of towns and cities. 61 If a master was angry with some erring slaves, Basil begged him to forgive them. 62 He wrote directly to the Emperor, asking for the construction of a bridge. 63 There was not any wretchedness, deserved or unmerited, not an interest, great or small, public or private, which had not Basil for its advocate." 64 In each district of his diocese, administered by a chorepiscopus, he established a hospice.

At the gate of Caesarea he built a vast charitable institution that was like a new city, constructed by alms. "It was hospitality in all its forms. There was a place of rest for the traveler, an asylum for the aged, a hospital for the sick, with a section reserved for those human ailments that involve contagion and shame. In the center of these buildings stood an immense church. Round about moved a large number of keepers, nurses, tradesmen, and carters, transporting things needed for the life of the establishment. Through the midst of all this activity, Basil would come and go at all hours, inspecting everything, speaking to everyone, filling all with his zeal. A century after him this whole district was still called the Basiliade." <sup>65</sup> This foundation aroused the distrust of the civil power, but Basil's influence kept growing. In fact the Em-

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 83, 84, 85, 88, 110, 303, 308, 309, 311, 312, 313.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>64</sup> Allard, Saint Basile, pp. 107 f.

<sup>65</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 188 f.

peror, not only did not venture to censure him, but even commissioned him to go to Armenia for the purpose of establishing concord between the bishops there and to make provision for the vacant sees.

Yet at times Basil, by his devotedness, risked his liberty and his life. He acted in behalf of a widow who, when pestered by an official wanting to marry her against her wishes, took refuge in the Caesarea church. The Bishop gave her asylum in his house. The prefect, coming to the support of his subordinate, summoned Basil before his tribunal and even dared to utter most infamous insinuations against him. While Basil was calmly presenting his defense, the people rushed out into the streets. At their head were the workmen from the imperial factories, brandishing their work tools. At sound of the uprising, which was coming nearer the tribunal, the prefect was alarmed and had only time enough to free Basil, who generously protected the fleeing official against the fury of the mob.<sup>66</sup>

### Government of the Diocese

These works of mercy did not make Basil neglect the good government of his diocese. He closely supervised the chorepiscopi's administration. To the end of his life and despite his poor health, he visited the most remote parishes, those most difficult of access, in the mountains. The religious eccentricities indulged in by certain monks and country priests found no favor with him. This watchfulness does not imply any severity on his part toward his priests. Before the State he was careful to uphold the ecclesiastical immunities. From the civil power he demanded jurisdiction over offenses that were harmful to the churches.

<sup>66</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, XLIII, 56 f.

<sup>67</sup> St. Basil, Letter 283.

Though weakened by age and by his austerities, an ardent love of God and souls sustained him in his preaching, which was very frequent, and in his pastoral journeys, which he never tired of. The coming of Gratian, the decree issued by that emperor in favor of religious liberty, and the election, in 378, of his friend Gregory to the see of Nazianzus, were St. Basil's last joys in this world. He died January 1, 379. The whole people of the province flocked to his funeral. Pagans and Jews mingled their tears with those of the Christians, for he had been the benefactor of all.

#### Ecclesiastical Writers

Along with Basil, after the death of Julian the Apostate, other valiant champions of the Church, though not exercising an influence like that of the Bishop of Caesarea, fought the good fight of the faith. His brother Gregory of Nyssa and his friend Gregory Nazianzen would not display their full activity until the reign of Theodosius. Three illustrious Fathers, however, illumined the Latin Church.

Hilary of Poitiers, before leaving this world, published two important works: his masterly writing Against Auxentius, in 365, and, the next year, his scholarly Commentary on the Psalms. Ambrose, prefect of Milan in 372, and bishop of that city in 374, prefaced the great part he would later take in the Church and in the Empire, by becoming the close adviser of Emperor Gratian. St. Jerome, a hermit in the Chalcis desert since 374, there gave the firstfruits of his vigorous talent by the publication, in 376, of his Life of Paul of Thebes.

In a less eminent rank, Ulfilas bishop of the Visigoths of the Upper Danube, drew the attention of the faithful about 376 by his *Commentary on St. Luke*. The exegete known under the name of Ambrosiaster <sup>68</sup> published his *Commen*-

<sup>68</sup> Dom Morin, in the Revue bénédictine, January 1914, ably maintains that the

taries on St. Paul. Optatus of Milevis, an original and profound writer, set forth in his History of the Donatist Schism, a doctrine the principles of which St. Augustine would adopt and develop. In the East the work of Christian scholars was no less fruitful. Between 374 and 377 Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis (Constantia), with earnest and at times too credulous zeal, laid bare all the heresies of his time in his Ancoratus and his Panarion. In 376 St. John Chrysostom began his apostolic career with his book Against the Defamers of the Monastic Life.

Above all these writers, dominating the East and West by his high station, Pope Damasus, restoring the monuments of the first Christian centuries and adorning them with elegant inscriptions, added to the renown of his virtues the glory of his zeal for the embellishment of the Eternal City.

# St. Hilary of Poitiers

The book Against Auxentius, published by St. Hilary in 365, aimed at turning the bishops of Italy from the semi-Arian Bishop of Milan, Auxentius, who had been set over that important diocese by the will of Emperor Valentinian. The Bishop of Poitiers in his book, which is addressed to the bishops and the faithful, but also has in mind the sovereign himself, rises up forcefully against the interference of the civil power in the spiritual affairs of the Church on the pretext of protecting it.

He would prefer open persecution to such a regime. "The word 'peace' is a beautiful word," he says, "and the idea of unity is beautiful. But let us beware of the false peace of Antichrist. We must bewail the wretchedness of our age,

writer known as Ambrosiaster is Evagrius, patriarch of Antioch, who died in 393, who was known for his relations with St. Damasus and St. Jerome, for his Latin translation of the Life of St. Antony, which St. Athanasius wrote in Greek, and for several other writings.

when it is thought that men can protect God, when people work to defend the Church of Christ by worldly intrigues.
. . . I ask you whether it was by decrees of a prince that Paul, made a spectacle of in the circus, formed a Church for Jesus Christ. By today, alas, earthly protections command the divine faith, and the Church glories in being beloved by the world, the Church which has been able to be Christ's only on condition that it be hated by the world." <sup>69</sup> Of course, by these words, the holy Bishop did not mean to deny the duty which every State has to protect the benevolent work of the Church, but he was simply contrasting the Church of the first centuries with the Church of the Arians.

A commentary on the Psalms (Tractatus super psalmos) was a sort of last breath from the soul of the great bishop. This writing, the fruit of a mind ripened by virtue and study, represents the height of Hilary's exegetical work. He determines to grasp the literal sense by comparing the different Latin and Greek translations and by referring to the authorized commentators. At the same time he endeavors to fathom the deep, mystical meaning of a book that he calls "the heavenly intercourse of human hope."

Like St. Athanasius, St. Hilary had a peaceful, gentle death. According to the most reliable conjectures, he died January 13, 368. Says Tillemont: "He died at Poitiers, in his fatherland, full of holiness and faith, after performing many miracles. Some manuscripts of his life note that, at the moment of his death, there entered his room a light so brilliant that no one could endure its brightness." <sup>70</sup>

### St. Ambrose

Scarcely six years passed after the death of the illustrious Bishop of Poitiers, when another son of Gaul, Ambrose, called

<sup>69</sup> St. Hilary, Contra Auxentium, nos. 2-4.

<sup>70</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires (1700 ed.), VII, art. 18 (St. Hilary).

to a destiny no less great, ascended the see of Milan. Among the members of that class of Christian patricians already mentioned,<sup>71</sup> and among those frequenting the palace of the Anicii, a young man was pointed out in particular as giving promise of a brilliant future. He was the son of a former prefect of Gallia. Born at Treves in 340, he was brought to Rome by his devout mother after his father's premature death.72 With them came his sister Marcellina, who would receive the veil from the hands of Pope St. Liberius, and his brother Satyrus, to whom he was always united in close and tender affection. Ambrose—such was his name—was distinguished by a clear intellect, an upright character, and a charming ease of speech. It was said of him, as of Plato, that in his infancy, while he was sleeping in his crib, a swarm of bees fluttered about his face and that some of them, without harming him, even slipped into his half-open mouth. His father, witnessing this prodigy, exclaimed: "This child, if he lives, will be something great."

Ambrose, destined to follow, like his father, the career of high public office, devoted himself assiduously to the study of Greek literature, philosophy, and especially law. First he entered the practice of law, as did his brother. He pleaded his cases so brilliantly that the praetorian prefect of Rome, Petronius Probus, appointed him his secretary. After a while, in 372, Probus recommended him to Emperor Valentinian, to be sent, with the title of "consular," to govern the provinces of Liguria and Aemilia, the capital of which was the important city of Milan. The story is told that, as Ambrose was leaving, the prefect, recommending the qualities of gentleness and moderation with which it was advisable to govern those important provinces, said to him: "Conduct thyself not as a judge, but as a bishop." These words soon appeared prophetic.

<sup>71</sup> See *supra*, p. 227.

<sup>72</sup> We do not know the name of St. Ambrose's mother.

In fact, two years later, after the death of the semi-Arian bishop of Milan, Auxentius, when the bishops were in the basilica deliberating about the choice of a successor, an impatient and excited crowd of people, divided into various camps, was stirred with an animosity that might easily degenerate into a riot. Ambrose came in haste to calm the disorder. His eloquent and sympathetic words soon quieted the tumult. The people were keeping silent to hear him, when a child's voice cried out over and over again: "Ambrose the bishop!" The words, coming from the lips of innocence, were regarded as a heavenly inspiration. The name of Ambrose was acclaimed by all the people and by all the clergy.

Following a regrettable custom that was then still rather general, Ambrose had not been baptized, nor was he even a catechumen. The canon law forbade the calling of a neophyte to the episcopacy. Further, he was a civil magistrate; and a law of Constantine forbade the magistrates of a city to belong to the clergy of that city. But so great was the enthusiasm that, despite the protests of Ambrose, who advanced this two-fold incompatibility, besides other reasons, no notice was taken of these provisions. The Emperor, and also the Pope, when informed of what had taken place, at once ratified everything. Ambrose, therefore, received baptism and, a few days later, took possession of the see of Milan. Basil, far off in the East, wrote him a letter of congratulation.

The event shortly proved how providential the choice of Ambrose had been. Immediately after his elevation his life, already simple and serious, became austere and penitential. All the money in his possession he distributed to the poor and assured them of the ownership of his landed property. The management of this he placed in the hands of his sister Marcellina. Simultaneously he carried on the ministry of almost

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> "Non valuit praeceptio, praevaluit impressio." St. Ambrose, Letter 63, no. 65, To the Church at Vercellae (*Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., vol. 10).

daily preaching, the cares of an episcopal administration which the necessities of that period rendered extremely burdensome, and the deep study of the doctrine which it was now his duty to teach.

His voice was not strong, but his speech, skilful and clear, nourished upon the great classics of antiquity, harmonious and ornate like that of a disciple of Virgil, precise like that of an accomplished jurist, charmed both the educated and the common people. One of his young listeners, who was still in the bonds of heresy, but who in turn would become a master of Christian eloquence, says: "I hung on his words intently and I was delighted with the pleasantness of his speech." 74

This same witness, Augustine—it is of him we are speaking—also mentions Ambrose's devotion to charity. He says:

"I had not the opportunity to make my demands unto him, what I would, or how I would; for that multitude of people full of business, whose infirmities he gave up himself unto, debarred me both from hearing and speaking with him." <sup>75</sup>

As we know, it had become customary to make the bishop the judge or arbiter, not only in matters of a spiritual order, but also in temporal affairs. When the bishop was, like Ambrose, a trained jurist and experienced administrator, who would not profit by so reliable and fatherly a jurisdiction? This was the truer since the Bishop, whenever the financial interests of his Church were in conflict with those of someone who was disinherited, would yield the episcopal rights. "The Church," he said, "never loses when charity wins."

Every moment which these occupations left free was devoted to study. We leave to St. Augustine, with his picturesque and living words, the description of St. Ambrose absorbed in the study of the sacred sciences.

<sup>74</sup> St. Augustine, Confessions, V, 13.

<sup>75</sup> St. Augustine, Confessions, VI, 3.

"When he was reading, he drew his eyes along over the leaves, and his heart searched into the sense, but his voice and tongue were silent. Ofttimes when we were present (for no man was debarred of coming to him, nor was it his fashion to be told of anybody that came to speak with him) we still saw him reading to himself, and never otherwise; so that having long sat in silence (for who durst be so bold as to interrupt him, so intentive to his study?) we were fain to depart. We conjectured, that the small time which he got for the repairing of his mind, he retired himself from the clamor of other men's businesses." <sup>76</sup>

Valentinian, when dying, entrusted to Ambrose his two young sons, Gratian and Valentinian II. Ambrose gave them wise counsel. He was especially dear to Gratian. "The greatest intimacy was at once established between the prince and the bishop. Presently Ambrose gave the spectacle—something new for the Church—of a bishop who was the confidant, almost the minister of an emperor, and was consulted not merely about matters of religion or good morals, but about political questions. Soon the effects of this influence were evident. From 378 to 381 Gratian lived almost constantly in Milan. In the legislative documents bearing his name the trace of Ambrose's influence can be easily recognized. Rigor is tempered with clemency in certain enactments about privileged corporations; in the distribution of the annona the spirit of order is combined with that of charity; there are prudently repressive laws against banditry. Less harshness is to be found in the prescription, less indication of violent measures than in the laws of Valentinian, less of sharp alternatives of powerlessness and weakness." 77

<sup>76</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., VI, 19 f. Cf. Theodosian Code, VII, xVIII, 2; XIII, v, 16; IX, 3; VI, XXVIII, 1; X, XX, 10; VII, XVIII, XLIV.

### St. Jerome

While a former member of the Roman upper magistracy was thus using in the service of the Church the resources of a mind trained in the service of the State, another Latin, of high culture and noble birth, was severing his connections with the world and was withdrawing into the desert, there to follow a penitential life. His name was Jerome. Posterity would enshrine his name with no less veneration than that of Ambrose.

Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus came of a wealthy Christian family. He was born in the year 342 at Stridon on the borders of Dalmatia and Pannonia in a semi-barbarous country. This origin he himself blames for the impetuosity of his character and the excess of his vehement feelings. When eighteen years old the young Dalmatian was sent by his father to Rome to pursue his studies. Under the direction of the famous grammarian Donatus and the celebrated rhetorician Victorinus, 79 he devoted himself earnestly to the study of the works of Aristotle, Plato, and Porphyry. Jerome was also very fond of Virgil, whose penetrating poetry went to the very depths of his loving soul, and of Cicero, whose flowing diction left its imprint upon the style of the future doctor of the Church. It was during this period of his life that he formed a large library by dint of persevering labor and by copying many entire books with his own hand.80

Unlike Augustine, Jerome never had to bewail a fall into heresy; but, like the great African doctor, he did not always succeed in protecting himself from the seductions of the great city. He refers to his faults only in passing, but he does so in

<sup>78</sup> St. Jerome, De viris illustribus, chap. 135.

<sup>79</sup> This is the Victorinus whose courageous conversion is related by St. Augustine, Confessions, VIII, 2.

<sup>80</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 22, no. 30, To Eustochium (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 35).

terms marked with a bitter remorse. He writes as follows to his friend Heliodorus:

"The advice that I give is that of no inexperienced mariner who has never lost either ship or cargo, and has never known a gale. Lately shipwrecked as I have been myself, my warnings to other voyagers spring from my own fears." 81

From Rome, where he was baptized by Pope Liberius in 365, Jerome shortly afterwards went to the city of Aquileia, the metropolis of his native province. At that time religious studies and the monastic life were flourishing in Aquileia. There he formed friendships that would hold a large place in his life. He made the acquaintance of Heliodorus, Innocent, and Hylas, all of whom later accompanied him into the desert, and of Rufinus, from whom he became separated in consequence of painful quarrels.

Aquileia was but one stage in Jerome's migratory life. Says Tillemont: "Already he began to have enemies. Their persecution of him was so violent that word of it reached the ears of Pope Damasus." \*2 Jerome decided to go to the East. The separation from his family and friends required painful efforts on his part. He writes: "I converse with your letter. As often as the lines—traced in a well-known hand—bring back to me the faces which I hold so dear, either I am no longer here, or else you are here with me." \*3 To Heliodorus he writes: "I am not ignorant of the fetters which you may plead as hindrances. I have passed through troubles like yours myself." \*84

"Accompanied by Heliodorus, Innocent, and Hylas, he set out," says Tillemont, who quotes from the saint's writings,

<sup>81</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 14, no. 6, To Heliodorus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 15).

<sup>82</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, vol. 12, art. 4, St. Jerome.

<sup>88</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 7, no. 2, To Chromatus, Jovinus, and Eusebius (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 9).

<sup>84</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 14, no. 3, To Heliodorus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 14).

"taking with him the library he had gathered in Rome. He visited a large number of provinces, passing through Thrace, Pontus, and Bithynia. He crossed Galatia and Cappadocia, suffered the intolerable heat of Cilicia, and finally in Syria found the rest he was seeking as a safe harbor after the shipwreck." <sup>85</sup>

Following a stay in Antioch, Jerome went into the desert of Chalcis. "Under a burning sky, amidst the desert sands where here and there a few monasteries arose, he came to find penance. There he found other sufferings besides. Heliodorus had gone back to the West; Innocent and Hylas were snatched from him by death. More bitter than these griefs, the recollection of his unrestrained youth troubled the peace of his soul." By a trial that seems to have been spared Augustine after his conversion, Jerome, in the midst of his mortifications, was haunted by obsessing memories of pagan Rome. These agonizing obsessions he describes with a vibrant and chaste emotion that has not been equaled perhaps even by the immortal author of the *Confessions*. He says:

"How often, when I was living in the desert, in the vast solitude which gives to hermits a savage dwelling-place, parched by a burning sun, how often did I fancy myself among the pleasures of Rome! I used to sit alone because I was filled with bitterness. Sackcloth disfigured my unshapely limbs, and my skin from long neglect had become as black as an Ethiopian's. Tears and groans were every day my portion; and if drowsiness chanced to overcome my struggles against it, my bare bones, which hardly held together, clashed against the ground. Although in my fear of hell I had consigned myself to this prison, where I had no companions but scorpions and wild beasts, I often found myself amid bevies of girls. My face was pale and my frame chilled with fasting; yet my mind was burning with desire, and the fires of lust kept bubbling up before me when

<sup>85</sup> Tillemont, op. cit., art. 5.

<sup>86</sup> Largent, Saint Jérôme, p. 11.

my flesh was good as dead. Helpless, I cast myself at the feet of Jesus, I watered them with my tears. I remember how I often cried aloud all night till the break of day and ceased not from beating my breast, till tranquillity returned at the chiding of the Lord. I used to dread my very cell as though it knew my thoughts; and, stern and angry with myself, I used to make my way alone into the desert. Wherever I saw hollow valleys, craggy mountains, steep cliffs, there I made my oratory, there the house of correction for my unhappy flesh. There also, when I had shed copious tears and had strained my eyes towards heaven, I sometimes felt myself among angelic hosts, and for joy and gladness sang: 'Because of the savor of thy good ointments we will run after thee.'" 87

We may well suppose that the recollection of the classical authors of whom Jerome had lately been so fond, had a part in these temptations. He strove by more austere studies to divert them.

"I betook myself," he says, "to a brother who before his conversion had been a Jew and asked him to teach me Hebrew. Thus, after having familiarized myself with the pointedness of Quintillian, the fluency of Cicero, the seriousness of Fronto, and the gentleness of Pliny, I began to learn my letters anew and to study to pronounce words both harsh and guttural. What labor I spent upon this task, what difficulties I went through, how often I despaired, how often I gave over and then in my eagerness to learn commenced again, can be attested both by myself the subject of this misery and by those who then lived with me. But I thank the Lord that from this seed of learning sown in bitterness I now cull sweet fruits." 88

Yet the enchanting pages of the favorite authors of his youth still returned to his mind. For most men of that time paganism was nothing more than a form of literature; but that literature was impressed with the sensuality of a world

<sup>87</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 22, no. 7, To Eustochius (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 25).

<sup>88</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 125, no. 12, To Rusticus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 248).

that had not known the cross of Christ. "How blind I was," Jerome exclaims.

"When at times I began to read the Prophets, their style seemed rude and repellent. After many nights spent in vigil, I would once more take up Plautus. . . . Suddenly I was caught up in the spirit and dragged before the judgment seat of the Judge. Asked who and what I was, I replied: 'I am a Christian.' But He who presided said: 'Thou liest, thou art a follower of Cicero, and not of Christ. For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.'" 89

Jerome became more and more devoted to the study of the Sacred Books. He did not forsake the memory of his classical education; his style abounds in recollections of Virgil, Cicero, Terence, and Lucretius. He has been called the most literary of the Fathers of the Church. But his literary culture now served merely to adorn the truth. In one of his letters he says: "I desire to make that secular wisdom a matron of the true Israel. . . . My efforts promote the advantage of Christ's family." 91

The Arian disputes and the quarrels stirred up by the Schism of Antioch also disturbed the peace which he came to find in the desert. Because, when speaking of the Trinity, he made use of the Latin terminology, because he was loath to use the words "three hypostases" and preferred the expression "three persons," some monks accused him of Sabellianism and denounced him as a heretic. And an effort was made to force him to declare himself regarding the legitimate bishop of Antioch. Did he stand with Meletius or with Paulinus? Jerome became exasperated. To one of his friends he writes as follows:

"I am called a heretic, although I preach the consubstantial Trinity. I am accused of the Sabellian impiety, although I proclaim

<sup>89</sup> Idem, Letter 22, no. 30, To Eustochius.

<sup>90</sup> Villemain, Tableau de l'éloquence chrétienne au IVe siècle (1856 ed.), p. 35L

<sup>91</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 70, no. 2, To Magnus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 149).

with unwearied voice that in the Godhead there are three distinct, real, whole, and perfect persons. The Arians do right to accuse me, but the orthodox forfeit their orthodoxy when they assail a faith like mine." <sup>92</sup>

On this question, as on that of the Antiochene Schism, Jerome leaves the decision to the See of Rome. He wrote as follows to Pope Damasus:

"I think it my duty to consult the chair of Peter. . . . This I know is the rock on which the Church is built. . . . I know nothing of Vitalis; I reject Meletius; I have nothing to do with Paulinus. He that gathers not with you scatters. . . . Just now, those Arians, the Campenses, 93 are trying to extort from me, a Roman Christian, their unheard-of formula of three hypostases. And this, too, after the definition of Nicaea and the decree of Alexandria, in which the West has joined. . . . If you think it right that I should speak of three hypostases, explaining what I mean by them, I am ready to submit. . . . I implore your Blessedness, therefore, by the crucified Savior of the world and by the consubstantial Trinity, to authorize me by letter either to use or to refuse this formula of three hypostases." 94

From this letter we might suppose that Jerome, distrusting the excesses of his vehemence, was merely seeking to shun the controversy. Later he was drawn into it and too often employed a vigor and an outburst of feeling that does not accord with the restrained polemics of Athanasius, Hilary, and Ambrose. Hard on himself, he showed the same severity toward those who disagreed with him, even very dear former friends like Rufinus of Aquileia, or venerable bishops like Augustine of Hippo. But everywhere and at all times the

<sup>92</sup> Idem, Letter 17, no. 2, To Marcus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 21).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Campenses (i. e., "the field party. The Meletians were so called because, denied access to the churches of the city, they had to worship in the open air outside the walls." Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 19 note. Tr.).

<sup>94</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 15, To Damasus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 18-20).

harsh solitary, whose lips let fall so many sharp words, remains an austere priest whose virtue disarms the most suspicious hatred; he remains the tireless investigator of the Sacred Books. Future exegetes will acknowledge him their master, the submissive son of the Holy See. Succeeding ages will fondly repeat his wonderful expressions of obedience and devotion to that see. And the Church, despite Jerome's excesses of language, will place on the brow of the fiery Dalmatian the halo of the saints.

## St. Epiphanius

The separation of the East and West into two political and literary quasi autonomies was a great injury both to the Church and to the Empire. Hence arose misunderstandings, rivalries, and conflicts. St. Athanasius' banishment to Gaul and St. Hilary's to Asia Minor, and, during the latter half of the fourth century, the long sojourn of the Latin St. Jerome in the East, seem to have been providential means for bringing about a fusion of minds between the two sections of the Empire. Unfortunately the introduction of fresh elements of discord did not allow this fusion to bear all the fruit that might have been expected.

St. Epiphanius' character is somewhat analogous to that of St. Jerome. Like the hermit of Chalcis, the Bishop of Salamis is abrupt of speech; he is passionately devoted to orthodoxy and enamored of the penitential and studious life. But the Greek Bishop does not possess the penetrating genius or the pure, harmonious style of the Latin priest.

Epiphanius was born in 315 at Besanduk, near Eleutheropolis, in Judea. In his youth he became devoted to the sacred sciences. While still very young, he was sent to Alexandria to pursue his studies. We are told that, owing to his inexperience, he took part in the conventicles of the Gnostics. But,

having penetrated the perversity of their doctrines and morals, he withdrew from them instantly. Thereafter he conceived so keen a horror for heresy that he spent his whole life denouncing and fighting it in all its forms.

This was the time when the anchorite Hilarion, also disabused of the errors he had imbibed in the Egyptian capital, spread in Palestine the manner of life of the Egyptian hermits. Epiphanius placed himself under his guidance. Then, in 337, Epiphanius founded, near his native village of Besanduk, at a place called Old Ad, a cenobitical colony according to the type of St. Pachomius. History knows nothing about his life during the thirty years he spent in his monastic cell. But the writings he published in his maturity and old age bear witness to the silent labors of his solitude. Not satisfied with perfecting himself in the Greek language, he there learned Syriac, Hebrew, Egyptian, and even, in part, Latin, a rare accomplishment in the East. St. Jerome, his rival in studious austerity, called him "the pentaglot."

In 367 his repute for learning and holiness led to his being chosen Bishop of Constantia, the ancient Salamis, metropolis of the Island of Cyprus. "But it seems that the scholarly monk was less prepared for the management of affairs than for dogmatic polemics. His disagreement with John, bishop of Jerusalem, and later his proceedings against St. John Chrysostom, indicate that he was not familiar with the canon laws and that he was unable to discern the plots of intriguing schemers." <sup>95</sup>

His campaigns against heresies were more justified. The death of St. Athanasius in 373 enabled the dissenting sects to raise their heads. Some Christians of Pamphylia asked Epiphanius for a statement of the orthodox faith on the chief doctrines that were being attacked or distorted. This was the origin of the holy doctor's first book, the *Ancoratus*, <sup>96</sup> which,

<sup>95</sup> Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, III, 24.

<sup>96</sup> P. G., XLIII, 17-236.

for the faithful in the midst of the disputes, would be a sure "anchor" in the faith. The work ends with two remarkable confessions of faith, the latter of which was adopted in 381 by the Council of Constantinople as the Creed of the universal Church

A few years later Epiphanius issued another work that was more important because of the extensive erudition it showed. It was entitled the *Panarion* or "Medicine-chest against Eighty Heresies." <sup>97</sup> This is the work usually referred to as the *Haereses*. It contains inexactitudes which at times indicate a lack of critical spirit or undue credulity. Besides, for Epiphanius the word "heresy" has not the precise meaning which the language of the Church gives it today. He regards as a heretic anyone who departs from a respected tradition or, following the etymology of the word, "chooses" such or such an individual opinion, such or such a personal point of view.

On this basis, Epiphanius considers Origen as the father of the principal heresies. His animosity toward the author of the *Peri Arkon* and toward all those whom he connects with his school, is evidently exaggerated. "Having little taste for philosophical speculation, Epiphanius judges that the traditional faith is sufficient and that men, by meddling with it, merely inject error into it. He therefore adheres solely to the official symbol of orthodoxy. This he repeats over and over again. He is like a smith who keeps a piece of iron on the anvil, not to give it some shape, but to hammer it until the last flaw is destroyed." 98 Such a work, however, filled a need at that period. And today Epiphanius' gigantic labor is still the most valuable repertory from which history can obtain a knowledge of the heresies and theological doctrines in Christian antiquity.

We must add that this strict polemist is, like Jerome, a

<sup>97</sup> P. G., XLI, 173 ff.

<sup>98</sup> Régnon, op. cit., III, 25.

mystic also. No one has spoken with greater precision and warmth about the close union which Christ contracts with His Church and about the life which He infuses into it. And no one has more lovingly celebrated her who is both the Mother of the Church and the Mother of God. He hails her with the title of Theotokos and thus, curiously enough, he is in agreement with Origen and the latter's disciples, the only ones who, before Epiphanius, gave this appellation to the Blessed Virgin. <sup>99</sup>

# St. John Chrysostom

Regrettable though transient disagreements separated St. Epiphanius and St. Chrysostom. A native difference of genius seemed to keep these two great men apart, although both were animated by the same zeal. Both prefaced their apostolate by a sojourn in the desert. In 375 and 376, just when Epiphanius' Panarion appeared, John, in his solitude, wrote two treatises—On Compunction and Against the Adversaries of the Monastic Life. He was then not more than thirty years old.

Born in 347 (or perhaps 344),<sup>100</sup> in the city of Antioch, John, whom posterity would surname Chrysostom <sup>101</sup> or Golden-mouthed, was the son of Secundus, a high officer of the Eastern Empire. His mother, Anthusa, widowed at the age of twenty, shortly after the birth of her only son, gave him a finished classical education by the best teachers, while she herself brought him up in the purest piety.

"Anthusa had not, like Monica, to watch and correct the wanderings of an ardent nature, to bring back her son by patience to faith and virtue; she had only to assist, in a certain measure, at the har-

<sup>99</sup> Petau, De incarnatione, V, 15.

<sup>100</sup> Puech, St. John Chrysostom, p. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> This is the name we shall use when referring to him. The practice of calling him Chrysostom does not go back earlier than the seventh century.

monious development of a pure soul, which seems never to have been disturbed by earthly passions."  $^{102}$ 

In accordance with a custom then rather prevalent, John was not baptized until 369, and was shortly afterwards ordained lector by Meletius bishop of Antioch.<sup>103</sup> The latter was an experienced, moderate man. He and Bishop Diodorus of Tarsus were Chrysostom's teachers in the sacred sciences.

Diodorus, the founder of that Antiochene School whose exegetical principles would be exaggerated by his disciple Theodore of Mopsuestia, exercised a lasting influence upon Chrysostom's mind. We discover traces of this in the great doctor's homilies, nearly all of them written in the form of commentaries on the Sacred Books. There was another teacher whose influence on Chrysostom's life was no less notable. His name was Carterius. At Antioch he directed what Sozomen calls "a school of ascetics." <sup>104</sup> It was while listening to him that the young son of Secundus and Anthusa became enthusiastic for the monastic life. But he satisfied his longing only after his mother's death in 374 or 375.

For a period of four years he followed the cenobitical life in the mountains near Antioch. Then for two years he lived as an anchorite in a cave until the hour when his health, seriously affected by austerities, obliged him to return to his native city. But, before leaving his solitude, the young monk wished, by the publication of three works in Apologetics, to defend the monastic state against the attacks made upon it. These three

<sup>102</sup> Puech, ob. cit., p. 4.

<sup>108</sup> There were several reasons for this delay. Probably some parents, who were half-hearted Christians, wished to let their children pass their youth in greater laxity. Others, without much reflection, followed a custom that went back to the earliest years of Christianity, when those who were Christians from childhood were necessarily few in number. Still others followed a loftier impulse: the idea of the greatness of baptism, and of the trials and preparatory penances which such a sacrament called for.

<sup>104</sup> Sozomen, VIII, 2.

writings are: On Compunction, Against the Adversaries of the Monastic Life, and The Comparison of a Monk with a King. Says Dom Ceillier: "The flowery style of these three books and the numerous examples and quotations from profane authors make us certain that St. Chrysostom wrote them while he was still young." 105

The treatise On Compunction begins by roundly upbraiding the crime of those who railed against the religious state or despised it. Did not a certain Christian of Antioch go so far as to say that the sight of a free man turning monk was enough to make him lose his faith and offer sacrifice to the devil? The zealous apologist exclaims: "For a man to take a stand against the monastic state is to rebel against the Lord Himself, it is to follow in the footsteps of Nero." Then addressing pagan fathers and Christian mothers, he shows them they should be glad to see their sons, after joining the elite of men by embracing Christianity, join the elite of Christians by becoming monks.

"The work Against the Adversaries of the Monastic Life comes straight from the heart. It is written with marvelous warmth. . . . Chrysostom likes to describe the way time is spent in the monasteries. The prayers which the solitaries taught him he records as models. He eulogizes Egypt and those desert places with a beauty of Paradise, where, by thousands, dwell choirs of angels in human form, whole populations of martyrs, immense communities of virgins. He recommends that people go from time to time and visit the neighboring monasteries, there make a sort of retreat and especially admire the great ones of earth when they condescend to spend a few days in the midst of that equality to be found there." 106

In a third treatise, much shorter than the other two,

 <sup>105</sup> Ceillier, Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés (1861 ed.), VII, 18.
 106 Puech, Un réformateur de la société chrétienne au IV° siècle, saint Jean

Chrysostome, pp. 257-259.

Chrysostom compares the monk to a king, and gives preeminence to the monk. "When you behold a powerful man," he concludes, "richly dressed, riding in a magnificent chariot, do not say: 'That man is blessed.' The truth is, that man's happiness is transient. But when you meet a poor hermit, with worn-out clothes, modest bearing, his face radiant with peace, say: 'This man possesses real blessedness; I want to be like him.'"

Thus, like Basil, like Gregory Nazianzen, like Jerome, like Epiphanius, like the majority of the doctors of the fourth century, Chrysostom started by experiencing the influence of monastic asceticism. Therein Basil had ripened his theological thought; Gregory Nazianzen, his tender piety; Jerome and Epiphanius, their passion for study. Chrysostom there found the first accents of an eloquence that would be unequaled among the men of his time.

#### Pope St. Damasus

Under the impulse of Pope Damasus the Eternal City was adorned with impressive Christian monuments, the study of the Scriptures spread among the faithful, and the Holy See, with growing ascendency, exercised its sovereign authority over all.

Amid the disputes raised by Arianism, Apollinarianism, the Antiochene Schism, and several other questionable movements, Damasus felt it necessary to renew among the faithful the veneration of the old Christian traditions. The holy Pontiff's regard for the ancient monuments extended even to those of non-Christian ages.

"In his person and energy, old came into touch with new. . . . Symmachus, the rhetorician, the champion of paganism, was accused of having unjustly punished Christians when city prefect, for the pretended crime of injuring the monuments of pagan cult. Pope

Damasus, on this occasion, gave evidence in favor of the accused prefect. He testified in court that no Christian had suffered any unfair treatment from Symmachus. The prefect on his side was able to confirm that, as a fact, no Christian had ever even faced such an accusation before his tribunal." <sup>107</sup>

#### The Catacombs

But the Pope's attention naturally turned to the monuments of Christian Rome.

"It was this pope who did most to maintain intact the monumental memorials of ancient Christian Rome. Over the cataconibs he watched with especial care, and by means of epigraphs, particularly in metrical form, he preserved their traditions whilst also enriching their decoration." <sup>108</sup>

"St. Damasus had search made for the tombs of the martyrs in the old cemeteries. He removed the debris. He widened the important passageways, enlarged the light-shafts, had new ones made, and built stairways. He was also the poet of the martyrs, an elegant poet, in the judgment of St. Jerome the conscientious historian, 109 who cites his authorities, 110 and expresses reserve about events when he is not certain of their authenticity. Damasus had to make historical researches, which were facilitated by his experience with the archives of the Church, and he was painstaking in assembling what he knew about the martyrs. 112

<sup>107</sup> Grisar, History of Rome, I, 26, 261.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., I, 261.

<sup>109 &</sup>quot;Elegans in versibus scribendis." St. Jerome, De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis, 103. 110 "Percussor retulit Damaso mihi, cum puer essem," he says in one place (P. L., XIII, 396). In another passage, he says: "Fama refert" (Ibid., col. 402).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> "Haec audita refert Damasus, probat omnia Christus." (De Rossi, Bulletino di archeologia cristiana, 1881, p. 26.)

<sup>112 &</sup>quot;Damasus' epigraphic work," says Duchesne (*Liber pontificalis*, I, 214), "is closely connected, as the *Liber pontificalis* says, with investigations regarding the shrines of the martyrs and their right to the veneration of Christians."

"The Damascene inscriptions are carved in marble in very beautiful lettering of special form, with characteristics that are quite peculiar to them. Attempts have been made to imitate them, but with indifferent success. Damascene inscriptions, found in all the Roman catacombs, preserve many pages of the history of the martyrs which otherwise would have been altogether lost. The prayers they contain are a further proof of the antiquity of belief in the communion of saints and of the worship paid to the martyrs. Lastly, they help us to determine, in each catacomb, the position of the most venerated tombs. They possess, therefore, a great dogmatic, historical, and topographical importance." 115

# Pilgrimages

St. Damasus' architectural work and lapidary inscriptions indirectly but effectively seconded the apologetic labors of Basil, Ambrose, and Jerome. They stimulated pilgrimages to the relics venerated since the first centuries. St. Jerome relates how, when he was living in Rome, he used to go every Sunday, with students of his own age, to visit the tombs of the Apostles and martyrs. He says: "These underground passages hold, on either side, the mortal remains of the dead. The darkness is barely relieved by a little daylight making its way through a very small opening. As we walked along these galleries, we would repeat the verse of Virgil:

"Luctus ubique, pavor, et plurima mortis imago." 116

<sup>118</sup> The extremities of the letters always end in a curved line. The letters are chiseled deeply. Everywhere there is the same proportion between the width and the height. The outside lines of the letter "M" are vertical. De Rossi discovered the name of the artist whom St. Damasus commissioned to carve his verses.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> The complete collection will be found in De Rossi, *Inscriptiones christianae urbis Romae*, vol. 2. The principal ones are given in Marucchi, *Eléments d'archéologie chrétienne*, I, 227, 235.

<sup>115</sup> Marucchi, op. cit., pp. 225, 226, 228, 235.

<sup>116</sup> St. Jerome, In Ezechielem, XII, 11.

Upon leaving these catacombs, where rested the relics of the martyrs who died for their faith, the devout pilgrims took a resolution to maintain the religion of the olden times against all the daring novelties.

## Canon of Scripture

The same wisely conservative and traditional spirit is to be noted in Pope Damasus' various acts regarding the canon of the Scriptures.

"The first decree was promulgated by the Pope at the Roman Council of 374. It is the earliest decision which gives a complete list of the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments, and is therefore deeply important in the history of the canon of the Bible. It serves to prove that, even then, the sacred books were recognized and read in the church, as having been written 'under the operation of God,' as those which are still accepted by Catholics as inspired or canonical. The list begins thus: 'The list of the books of the Old Testament which the Holy Catholic Church accepts and reveres, is as follows,' the formula implying that it is a rule of faith based on the earliest traditions, especially of the Roman Church, and teaching mankind in which books the word of God is contained. . . . Thus did the traditions of the See of Peter become an infallible compass by which other Churches might regulate themselves, testing their traditions by those of Rome." 117

#### Roman Primacy

In relating the history of the heresies and schisms of this period, we have had occasion to notice that the position taken by Pope Damasus was always that of a chief. At the Council of Rome (369), the Pope and the Fathers drew up a declara-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Grisar, op. cit., I, 337 f. A decision of a council of Hippo (393) regarding the canon of Scripture, ends as follows: "For the confirmation of this list, agreement must be had with the Church across the seas." P. L., LVI, 429. The canon of St. Damasus may be seen in Mansi, VIII, 15 f.

tion that would be regarded as a rule of faith. 118 At the Council of Antioch (378), this doctrinal writing was subscribed to by 146 bishops whose signatures are preserved in the archives of the Roman Church. 119 Recognition by the See of Rome made one accepted as a legitimate bishop. 120 Damasus also showed his supremacy by deposing the most notable bishops of the Empire when they adhered to Arianism. 121 And these decisions of the Roman Pontiff were accepted and acclaimed by the Eastern Fathers as well as by those of the West. "I communicate with none but your Blessedness, that is, with the Chair of Peter," St. Jerome writes. 122 "Where Peter is," says St. Ambrose, 123 "there is the Church." In a recently discovered treatise, Priscillian declares that the bishop of Rome "holds supreme rank, is the first of all." 124 St. Basil addresses Pope Damasus as the sole authority able to settle a controversy, 125 begging him to use his special power to declare null, throughout the East, the decrees of the Council of Rimini.126

One of the most remarkable acts of Damasus was the declaration regarding the origin of the different patriarchates and their dependence upon the See of Rome.

"His emphatic utterance on the subject of the supremacy of the Roman Church, founded by Christ on Peter—a decree which sets, so to speak, the crown upon all previous pronouncements on the primacy—begins thus: 127 'The entire Catholic Church spread over

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118 "Tomus." Cf. Jaffé, no. 232 (I, 37); Mansi, III, 443.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Mansi, III, 461.

<sup>120</sup> St. Basil, Letter 263, P. G., XXXII, 979.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> See his attitude toward Maxentius of Milan (Mansi, VIII, 459), Maximus the Cynic (Mansi, VIII, 479), Nectarius (Mansi, VIII, 756), and Peter of Alexandria (Jaffé, no. 236).

<sup>122</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 15, no. 2, To Damasus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 18).

<sup>123 &</sup>quot;Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia," St. Ambrose, In psalmum 40, P. L., XIV, 1134.

<sup>124</sup> Schepss, Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum, LVIII, 34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Letter 70.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> Letter 69.

<sup>127</sup> Mansi, VIII, 158.

the globe is the sole bridal chamber of Christ. But the Church of Rome has been placed above all other Churches, not by decrees of Councils, but by the word of our Lord and Savior in the Gospel, who gave it the primacy when He said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." . . . Pope Damasus then goes on to state that Peter suffered martyrdom in Rome with Paul; that they had 'consecrated the Church of Rome to Christ the Lord,' and that 'by their presence and their triumph Rome had been raised above all other cities. . . . The second see was consecrated at Alexandria, in the name of St. Peter, by his disciple Mark the Evangelist. . . . The third chair of Peter, however, at Antioch, is of equally distinguished rank, for there Peter had dwelt himself before he came to Rome.' 128

"Various views have been offered regarding the origin of the patriarchal dignity. The above papal decree has the great advantage of being the earliest, and of emanating from the best authority. . . . No more satisfactory explanation than that of Pope Damascus could be given regarding the existing preëminence of the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch. . . . The view was not excluded that the historical commencement of the preëminence of Alexandria and Antioch was also largely a result of the good work done by these churches for the spread of the faith throughout their wide spheres of influence. As a fact, both became parent-churches to numerous bishoprics of their own foundation. As regards the principle, however, it must be borne in mind that any preëminence above other bishops of patriarchs or exarchs or archbishops was merely an outcome of historical circumstances, and not of any divine ordinance. The only exception was the primacy of Peter. The Gospels and Tradition assure us of this one, but of this one only, that it is to continue by divine ordinance as a lasting office embodied in the heirs of Peter, the head of the whole Church." 129

<sup>128</sup> Damasus names only two patriarchates. He does not speak of that of Constantinople, which was created in 381, and could not claim a close historical connection with St. Peter or any of the Apostles. He is also silent about the patriarchate of Jerusalem, which was not officially erected until the first half of the fifth century.

129 Grisar, *History of Rome*, I, 339 f.

#### The Gothic Church

When Pope Damasus was thus proclaiming the fundamental laws of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, Arianism had almost disappeared from the Empire, but it had won the barbarian races. Considering the decrepitude of the imperial institutions and the daring of the young races who were hurling themselves in assault upon the old Roman organism, the danger might be very great indeed. Happily, while the Arian Bishop Ulfilas was spreading heresy among the Goths, another bishop, St. Martin of Tours, was evangelizing the peoples of Gaul with the purest Catholic doctrine, thus preparing in the Church the most zealous champions of the faith. Furthermore, the Empire's political and religious situation was soon to recover by the advent of a truly Christian Emperor, Theodosius.

The mighty and warlike nation of the Goths in the third century formed, on the banks of the Danube, the advance-guard of the Germanic invasions. They were divided into two sections: the Visigoths to the west, the Ostrogoths to the east. Under Emperor Philip they had forced the Roman lines and invaded Mysia. Later they ravaged Greece, Illyria, Troas, and Cappadocia, destroyed the temple of Ephesus by fire, made off with wagonloads of plunder from Nicaea and Athens, and drove before them throngs of captives in chains. Many of these captives were Christians, who preached the Gospel to their conquerors.

Thus was born the Church of the Goths, which was represented in the Council of Nicaea by Bishop Theophilus.<sup>131</sup> He was succeeded by Ulfilas who exercised a decisive influence upon the future of the Gothic race. This man's origin is obscure, as is the origin of his name Ulfilas (son of the wolf),

<sup>130</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 383.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>181</sup> See *supra*, p. 31.

by which he has always been known. 132 Probably he sprang from a noble family among the Goths, and was not of Cappadocian stock, as has been said. In 340 he was sent as a hostage to Constantinople. There he was seduced by the imperial majesty which in Constantinople shone in full splendor, and by Arian Christianity with its supple and vague formulas which the Homoeans professed. He was consecrated bishop in 341 by Eusebius of Nicomedia and belonged to the party which Valens and Ursacius represented in Pannonia and Mysia, attaching little importance to the doctrinal differences which divided the various Arian sects, unconcerned with religious metaphysics, but determined to give his people a national religion closely united with its political organization. His eloquent preaching of the doctrine of one eternal God, independent of the world, as opposed to the divinities of Germanic mythology, brought him great prestige. At the time of a reaction of the pagan party, he led away with him part of the Goths to the foot of the Balkans. This deed won for him the reputation of a national hero.

His brilliant learning crowned his renown. His translation of the Bible into Gothic was a work of intelligence and erudition, and established in his nation the conception he had formed at Constantinople of the Christian religion. It is said "that he never lost sight of the particular spirit of the Gothic people, and that he was always at pains to transpose the foreign ideas of the East into the Germanic spirit." <sup>183</sup> To express the gentle precepts of the Gospel, the old Runic tongue had to be softened. "The Runic alphabet in use among the Goths had sufficed for scratching omens on magical wands or inscriptions on tombs. It had to be enlarged for a more

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>182</sup> He was probably the son of a Goth and of a woman of Asia Minor who was a prisoner of war and a slave. Cf. Mangenot, art. "Ulfilas" in the Dictionnaire de la Bible, V, 2349.

<sup>138</sup> Kraus, Histoire de l'Église, French trans., II, 14.

scholarly usage; the number of letters was increased from sixteen to twenty-four. The Gothic language, fashioned in this manner, assumed a remarkable character of sweetness and majesty. It was evident that the fine qualities of the classical tongues would not perish with them. The translation of the Bible, that eternal book, began; it was the first work of modern literatures. When Ulfilas appeared, perhaps after a long retreat, radiant, bearing the Old and New Testaments to the people encamped in the plains of Mysia, he was like one descending from Sinai. The Greeks called him the Moses of his time. And it was the barbarians' opinion that "the son of the wolf could not do evil." <sup>134</sup>

#### Ulfilas' Arianism

A manuscript written by one of Ulfilas' disciples, Auxentius, Arian bishop of Silistria, and discovered by Waitz in the Louvre Library, contains the profession of faith left by the celebrated Bishop in the form of a will. In it he affirms his belief "in one God Creator of every creature, who has none other like to Himself. Hence there is only one God of all, who, according to us also, is God (*ideo unus est omnium Deus, qui et de nostris est Deus*), and one only Holy Ghost, who is neither God nor Lord, but minister of Christ." <sup>135</sup> Ulfilas' doctrine about the Holy Ghost is very clear: it is pure Macedonianism. But his doctrine about the Son is vague. No one has been able to give an exact meaning to the very obscure expression, *unus omnium Deus, qui et de nostris est Deus*. Probably this obscurity was intentional, leaving the way free

<sup>134</sup> Ozanam, La Civilisation chrétienne chez les Francs, 5th ed., p. 28. Cf. Philostorgius, II, 5; Socrates, II, 41; Sozomen, VI, 37; Jornandes, De rebus geticis, chap. 25; P. L., LXIX, 1269 ff. Only fragments of Ulfilas' work remain. See Mangenot, art. "Ulfilas" in the Dictionnaire de la Bible, V, 2350-2355.

<sup>135</sup> Waitz, Ueber das Leben und die Lehre des Ulfila, pp. 10 ff.

for every subordinational, semi-Arian, and Anomoean interpretation. 136

The Arian heresy, implanted by Ulfilas among the Goths, spread among the Germanic peoples with whom the Goths were in contact: Gepidae, Rugians, Suevi, Vandals, Heruli, Burgundians, and Lombards. The Ostrogoths brought Arianism into Italy, to the very center of Christendom. Theodoric the Great, by taking it under his mighty patronage, at the very moment when Rome was greeting him as the restorer of the Empire, seemed on the point of entrusting to it the destinies of mankind. Providence, however, decided otherwise. At the end of the sixth century, after the battles of Tricamarum, Vesuvius, and Vouille, and after the tragic deaths of Theodoric, Totila, Teias, Sigismund, and Alaric II, all the Arian kingdoms, "the empire of the African pirates, the peaceful monarchies of Burgundy and Italy, the dread might of the Visigoths of Aquitania, the ill-defined realms of the Alani, Suevi, Heruli, and Gepidae, all had disappeared." <sup>137</sup> The work of the Arian Ulfilas, for a moment so brilliant, was reduced to nothing. The same cannot be said of the patient and laborious work of St. Martin in Gaul.

#### Paganism in Gaul

The first evangelization of Gaul goes back to the earliest times of Christianity.<sup>138</sup> At the close of the second century, in the time of St. Pothinus and St. Irenaeus, the faith and works of the Christians in Gaul shone with great brilliancy.

<sup>136</sup> Similar expressions are to be found in the few dogmatic evidences of Gothic Arianism that are extant. See Isidore of Seville, Historia de regibus Gothorum, no. 8 (P. L., LXXXIII, 1060); Victor Vitensis, De persecutione Vandalica, IV, 1 (P. L., LVIII, 236); Paul Warnefridus, De gestis Langobardorum, IV, 44 (P. L., XCV, 581); St. Augustine, Sermo Arianorum, Collatio cum Maximino (P. L., XLII, 677-742).

<sup>137</sup> Kurth, Les Origines de la civilisation moderne, I, 379.

<sup>138</sup> Mourret, op. cit., I, 178 ff.

But, after the death of the great Bishop of Lyons and following the grievous persecution under Septimius Severus, the spread of the faith among the Gauls was notably retarded. The evidence we possess regarding the middle of the fourth century shows us Christianity being practiced only in the big cities, which were very few in number.

While the rural peoples of the East then counted numerous devout and well instructed Christians, the peasants of the West, almost without exception, remained attached to their ancient divinities. The influence of the monastic institutions, which was very powerful in the East, whereas it was as yet unfelt in the West, may explain this difference. Especially in Gaul "the word *pagani*—inhabitants of the *pagus* or country district, peasants, as opposed to inhabitants of the cities—took on a religious meaning in the fourth century. Even at the close of the century, despite active preaching, there were large towns containing not a single Christian.<sup>130</sup>

The nation of the Gauls was divided into three classes: the priests, who were likewise magistrates and judges in civil and criminal cases; the knights, who formed a civil and military aristocracy; and the common people, who were excluded from the government and from any honors. The Gallic clergy was made up of three categories: the druids, the bards, and the diviners. The druids had charge of the religious ceremonies in the ancient forests, where sacred plants were gathered: the mistletoe and the verbena. The bards played on the harp and sang hymns in honor of the gods. The diviners foretold the future by observing the flight of birds and by inspecting the victims offered in sacrifice. The doctrines of Druidism seem to have been rather lofty. Its fundamental tenets were belief in the immortality of the soul and in a future reward for brave warriors.

<sup>189</sup> C. Bayet, in Lavisse, Histoire de France, vol. II, part 1, p. 13. 140 Caesar, Gallic War, VI, 13.

#### Druidism

In the middle of the fourth century Druidism, the national religion of the Gauls, was mingled with either Greco-Roman mythology or Eastern religions, introduced into Gaul with the Roman armies, or with various forms of the prevailing heresies. "Druidism had long since lost its vitality. But, out of a mixture of Roman and Celtic mythology, was formed a popular religion, the monuments of which abound in France, although their interpretation is still far from clear." <sup>141</sup>

"Rome not only introduced its national religion into Gaul; it also brought there and spread those strange cults which it had received from the East and which, by their mysterious and supernatural aspect, would be the more pleasing to the Celtic peoples. The traces of these cults are particularly frequent in the regions that were longest and most easily subject to Roman influence, such as the districts near the Mediterranean or the Rhone River. Especially abundant are the Mithraic monuments. A large number of inscriptions, brought to light at Die, Riez, Valence, Vence, Orange, Vaison, and Narbonne, show us in how great honor the ceremony of the taurobolium was held.<sup>142</sup> . . . All these influences were enemies that Christianity would have to conquer among these peoples." <sup>143</sup>

141 Bayet, in Lavisse, loc. cit. The Parisians connected the worship of Jupiter Capitolinus with that of the old Celtic divinities Esus and Tarvus. At Nimes, Jupiter and Nemausus were honored together; at Apt, Mercury and Albianus. At Poitiers, they made a single god, called Mercury-Adsmerius, out of two divinities, one Roman and the other Celtic. In like manner there was a worship of Apollo-Cobledulitavus at Perigueux, of Mars Vincius at Vence, of Apollo Borva (Apollo of Bourbon) in Auvergne. The gods of the Celts were worshipped by themselves at Velleron (Vaucluse), Béziers, and in the vicinity of Orleans. Everywhere the people worshipped, besides these gods, the genii of streams and forests. Some gods and fairies were thought to dwell in the depth of mysterious springs and beneath the bark of large trees. See Dufourcq, La Christianisation des foules. Cf. Julian, Gallia, 2d ed., pp. 210 ff.

<sup>142</sup> On the ceremony of the bull sacrifice, see Mourret, op. cit., I, 443, note.

<sup>143</sup> Régnier, Saint Martin, pp. 19 f.

Christianity itself became altered. By the first half of the fourth century Arianism had entered Gaul and threatened to corrupt the evangelization of the country in its very source. To combat paganism in its different forms and to establish Christianity among the people by introducing the monastic life into Gaul, was therefore not enough. The Christian communities would have to be forewarned against the dangers of heresy. A man was raised up by God who quite by himself would assume this threefold mission: to evangelize the country districts of Gaul, to establish the monastic institution there, and everywhere to defend the purity of the faith.

#### St. Martin of Tours

His name was Martin. He was born at Sabaria in Pannonia at the end of the year 316 or the beginning of 317. His father was a pagan who had attained the rank of military tribune. Martin was brought up at Pavia, where his father, at the close of his military service, probably obtained some land as a benefice. At an early age Martin gave evidence of a gentle, pious soul and soon was enrolled among the catechumens of Christianity. Its doctrinal and moral teaching appealed to his heart. Even at that early age he showed a desire to flee into the desert, where he could follow the solitary life. To remove him from the Christian influence about him, if we are to accept the statement of Sulpicius Severus, and very likely in

<sup>144</sup> Régnier (op. cit., pp. 28 f.) gives the reasons for accepting this date.

<sup>145</sup> Nearly all that we know about St. Martin we owe to Sulpicius Severus, whose Vita Martini was written before the saint's death. Babut, in his Saint Martin de Tours, tries to destroy the authority of Sulpicius Severus' Vita Martini. His reasons are as follows: I. Except for Sulpicius Severus, St. Paulinus of Nola, and the Vienne epitaph of Foedula (written between 410 and 440), the name of St. Martin is not mentioned in the Gallic literature of the first half of the fifth century; 2. Sulpicius Severus, being favorably inclined toward Priscillianism, would unduly exalt the monk Martin, who was thought to be favorable to that little Church; 3. the Vita Martini abounds in marvels, some of them taken from St. Jerome, St. Hilary, and especially from the Life of St. Antony written by St. Athanasius. But these reasons do not seem conclusive: I. the inferences drawn from the silence

obedience to an imperial edict which required veterans' sons to enter the army, 146 his father enrolled him in the cavalry despite young Martin's reluctance. Martin was then fifteen years old. He did not really become a member of the armed military forces until he reached the age of nineteen. As we are told by Sulpicius Severus, his biographer, so well did he reconcile his new duties with the aspirations of his soul, that he found a way to live as a monk and at the same time as a soldier, chaste and sober as well as courageous. 147

Martin was charitable towards all. At Amiens, in the middle of winter, with a stroke of his sword he cut his cloak in two and gave half of it to a beggar. The next night, in a dream he saw the Savior, clothed in the part of the cloak with which he had covered the beggar. Christ said to him: "Martin, though as yet only a catechumen, clothed me with this mantle." Soon after this, at Easter time (339), he received baptism, being then twenty-two years old.<sup>148</sup>

Thereafter he thought only of consecrating himself entirely to God's service. In 341, at the time of an invasion of Franks, when summoned to receive a reward 149 from Em-

of contemporaries is excessive, the more so as this silence is not absolute; as De Labriolle says, "There is far more disconcerting silence in the history of the first centuries: Tertullian nowhere cites St. Hippolytus of Rome; St. Ambrose does not speak of St. Jerome, nor does St. Athanasius mention St. Hilary." Moreover, how are we to explain the extraordinary fame of St. Martin in Gaul if he was a mediocre person as Babut maintains? Would such a result have been brought about by Sulpicius Severus' literary work, however enthusiastic and able it may have been? 2. The Priscillianism of Sulpicius Severus is an arbitrary hypothesis. Says De Labriolle: "If we weigh each of the expressions by which Priscillianism is characterized by the author of the Vita Martini in his Chronicles, we shall see how harshly he speaks of it." 3. It is true that the Vita Martini abounds in marvels, and the account of these events may indicate that Sulpicius Severus was too trustfully credulous, but this circumstance does not at all weaken the substantial reality of the events. See De Labriolle in the Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétienne, April 15, 1915, pp. 148 ff.

<sup>146</sup> Theodosian Code, II, CCLXX.

<sup>147</sup> Sulpicius Severus, Vita Martini, 2.

<sup>148</sup> Régnier, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>149</sup> This gratuity, called donativum, was in principle the portion of the booty which

peror Constans, he declined it, saying: "Until now it is for you I have borne arms; permit me henceforth to do so for God." And he asked for his discharge from the army. The Emperor was vexed and accused him with seeking in religion an excuse for his failure in duty, saying: "You are prompted by cowardice; you want to avoid the battle that is expected tomorrow." "Since you attribute my conduct to cowardice," Martin replied, "and not to the faith, tomorrow I will take my stand in the front ranks of the line of battle and, in the name of the Lord Jesus, without arms, protected only by the sign of the cross, not by a shield or helmet, I will fearlessly make my way into the midst of the enemy." But Martin did not have to fulfil his promise. The next day the Franks sued for peace. 150

Following this event Martin left the military service. A few years later, <sup>151</sup> we find him at Poitiers with St. Hilary, who trained him in religious discipline and ordained him exorcist. Then we see him in his native Pannonia, where he accomplished a large number of conversions among the pagans. But he was there pursued by the hatred of the Arian heretics. He was seized, mistreated, beaten with rods. In Milan, where he sought refuge, he received the same treatment from the fierce partisans of the heretic Auxentius. The zealous apostle, longing for solitude and no less solicitous for the sanctification of his soul than for the salvation of his neighbor, then retired to a little desert island, Insula Gallinaria, so named because it was visited only by sea birds. "This island was a rock rather than an island. It is located in the Gulf of Genoa, opposite

came to a soldier after the victory. The Emperor, feeling the need of encouraging his troops on the eve of a campaign that promised to be a severe one, advanced the distribution of the *donativum*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> De Broglie (op. cit., IV, 17 f.) places this scene in the reign of Julian the Apostate. A closer examination fixes it in the reign of Constans. (Régnier, op. cit., pp. 36 f.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>151</sup> Tillemont, *Mémoires, Saint Martin*, art. 2; Lecoy de la Marche, *Saint Martin*, pp. 129 f.

Albenga, exposed to the sun's heat, without shade, without inhabitant, and lacking every human comfort." <sup>152</sup> In company with a holy priest, he there led a life of penance and meditation until the spring of 360, when, after Emperor Constantius recalled Hilary from exile, Martin rejoined the latter at Poitiers. The apostle of Gaul had so well studied men, prayed, meditated, and suffered, that he understood the important work to which God predestined him.

# Monastery at Ligugé

Enlightened and encouraged by Hilary's advice, Martin at first thought of bringing into Gaul that monastic discipline which he had witnessed in the East. Five miles from Poitiers, on the bank of the Clain, in a deserted region, now called Ligugé (Locoteiacus), he built a hut. Some Christians, desiring to be trained in the penitential life, joined him there and settled in huts like his, or merely lived in groves which they found nearby. They all met together for common exercises in a chapel located in the center of the monastic settlement. We have no exact information about the rule imposed by Martin upon his monks at Ligugé. It must have been like that of the Eastern monasteries, with which Martin was well acquainted.

"The Ligugé monastery was chiefly an asylum open to those who wanted to flee from the world. It was also a school. There candidates for baptism were received and were prepared for the probation of the catechumenate. Lastly, the Ligugé monastery was a nursery of apostles destined to evangelize the district, and this purpose may have been the principal aim in the mind of the holy founder. We are inclined to suppose so,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> Gervaise, Vie de saint Martin, p. 31. Reinkens thinks it was Gorgona, an island northeast of Corsica. Reinkens, Hilarius von Poitiers, p. 225.

<sup>158</sup> The Roman mile was about 4900 feet.

when we consider the subsequent course of his long life." 154

It is, in fact, from Ligugé that we see Martin set out to undertake daring expeditions against paganism. "He ventured into the towns, into the country districts where Christianity was unknown. He attacked rich, ancient shrines, that were centers of worship still active, destroyed them, and replaced them with churches and monasteries. He ran many risks. In the neighborhood of Autun the peasants assaulted him; one of them had raised his sword when, according to Sulpicius Severus, it was miraculously dashed to the ground. His way was marked by marvelous cures. Throngs became converted and asked for baptism. It is difficult to determine with certainty what districts he evangelized. Too often Sulpicius Severus fails to supply exact indications. Martin's mission seems to have been particularly active in the center—Touraine, Anjou, the regions of Chartres, Autun, Sens, and Paris. According to Gregory of Tours, he also visited the provinces of Saintonge and Angoumois. He probably spent some time in Vienne, where the epitaph has been found of a woman baptized by him." 155

# Martin, Bishop of Tours

In 371, three years after the death of St. Hilary, the bishopric of Tours became vacant through the death of St. Litorius, and Martin was chosen to be bishop of that city. But he was unwilling that his new duties should stand in the way of his life as a monk. Whatever time was not required by his episcopal duties he spent two miles from Tours, in a deserted spot, called Marmoutier, between a certain hillside and the River Loire. Like Ligugé, Marmoutier became a center of religious life and apostolate. A large number of men,

<sup>154</sup> Régnier, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>155</sup> Bayet, in Lavisse, Histoire de France, vol. II, part 1, p. 15.

who belonged to noble families and whose upbringing did not accustom them to that sort of life, came there and put on the coarse garments which Martin imposed upon his monks. Several, according to Sulpicius Severus' testimony, became bishops subsequently and spread about them the life of mortification and prayer, the habit of which they had formed at Marmoutier. Among these we find mentioned St. Maurilius bishop of Angers, St. Victorinus bishop of Mans, and St. Brice who succeeded St. Martin in the see of Tours. Among St. Martin's disciples history also mentions St. Patrick the apostle of Ireland, St. Corentius bishop of Cornouille (Quimper), another St. Martin archbishop of Lyons, St. Paulinus of Nola, St. Clair who, after his death, was seen in a dream by Sulpicius Severus, associated with the glory of his master, and Sulpicius Severus himself, who has left us the tenderest and most valuable recollections of the holy apostle of Gaul.

#### Rural Parishes

The Church of Gaul owes to St. Martin the establishment of rural parishes. So long as Christianity was spread only in the cities there did not exist a clergy distinct from the episcopal presbyterium. Canon 18 of the Council of Arles which, in 314, mentions urban deacons (diaconi urbici), evidently supposes there were then "rural deacons," who probably preached and baptized in the country districts. Canon 21 of the same Council, obliging priests and deacons to remain in the place where they are attached, has seemed to some authors to allude to the existence of rural parishes. This in-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> It may be that some rural parishes existed in Gaul before St. Martin, and certainly a very large number were established after him, especially in the beginning of the fifth century. But he was the chief organizer of parish delimitations.

terpretation is not certain, because canon 21, as also canon 2 which is like it, may be referring to residence in the diocese, not in the parish.<sup>157</sup> But canon 77 of the Council of Elvira evidently supposes the existence, at least in Spain, of deacons whose duty it is to govern rural groups.<sup>158</sup>

Whatever this embryonic organization may have been, the creation of rural parishes, strictly so called, in Gaul seems to have been influenced by three causes: I. when, as a result of St. Martin's preaching or that of his disciples, a considerable group of Christians was formed in the country, the bishop was led to replace the simple deacon by a priest or even by a resident chorepiscopus; 159 2. old documents tell us that several wealthy converts of that period, concerned about their eternal salvation and reparation for their past sins, often gave the bishop, pro remedio animae suae, houses and land in the midst of which they built a chapel; 160 this chapel then became the center of a new group with a resident priest; 3. the economic movement, the extension and organization of farming, developing side by side with Christian civilization, brought about, at points distant from the cities, the formation of groups of farmers who could not easily be assembled for the Sunday and feast day offices. Here the building of a church and the appointment of a priest for the parish service was a consequence of the grouping itself. But, by reciprocal benefit, the erection of the rural parishes was "one of the elements that most contributed to delimit the agricultural association, the village." 161 It has been said that the rural churches of this period were generally built at the crossing of two Roman

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> See Mourret, op. cit., I, 516.

<sup>158</sup> This canon speaks of the diaconus regens plebem. Hefele, I, 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> In the East the institution of *chorepiscopi* was longlived; but in the West it never acquired much stability.

<sup>160</sup> Pardessus, Diplomata ad res gallo-franciscas spectantia, I, 137.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>161</sup> Dareste de la Chavanne, Histoire des classes agricoles en France, p. 173.

roads, preferably in the *vici* and *castra*, sometimes in *loca* deserta when they were the work of the monks, very often on the site of some shrine of idolatry.<sup>162</sup>

Martin was as zealous in defending the purity of the faith as he was in spreading it. He warned the faithful against the snares of Arianism, but he distrusted the interference of Emperor Valentinian and his agents in the religious disputes. He feared lest the civil power, that at least which he had before his eyes, while seeming to protect the Church, should prove itself to be a jealous rival rather than a loyal helper. We shall soon see the holy Bishop expressing his views about it in the affair of Priscillian and his followers.

#### Death of Emperor Valens

While the holy Bishop of Tours was exercising his zeal in Gaul, preparing the nation to which he devoted his efforts to become one day "the eldest daughter of the Church," the Roman Empire experienced the most humiliating reverses at Adrianople. Emperor Valens fell in the battle, mortally wounded in the midst of the dead bodies of his best generals and half of his soldiers. This affected the whole defense of the frontiers. All the roads to Constantinople were now open to the barbarians. Says Ammianus Marcellinus: "Since the day of Cannae, never did the Republic suffer such a blow." Popular imagination at once named the cause of the disaster and pointed out the remedy. "The prince who brought the Empire to this great harm was a heretic; and by his example and his commands, heretics also were the barbarians under whose blows it was perishing. . . . No more paganism, no more heresy; let the law of the Church be the sole law of the

<sup>162</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, x, 25. Cf. Dufourcq, La Christianisation des foules; Marignan, Études sur la civilisation française, vol. 2, Le Culte des saints sous les Mérovingiens. See Imbart de la Tour, Les Paroisses rurales du IV• au XI• siècle.

State: such were the cries of public distress and of the public conscience." <sup>163</sup>

#### Theodosius

The young Emperor Gratian, now left alone to bear the heavy responsibility for the defense of the Empire at that critical hour, turned to a general, but lately out of favor with Valentinian and whom he himself had sacrificed to his own advancement. His name was Theodosius. His father had given proof of rare military ability in Britain and Africa by driving back the barbarians from the frontiers, but, in consequence of intrigues and cabals, became suspect at court and was sentenced to death. From that time Theodosius lived in retirment in Spain, his native country, giving an example of every Christian virtue. It is to Gratian's honor that he turned to this noble servant, thus far so ill requited for his services, and, after the battle of Adrianople, entrusted the command of an army to him. The next year (379) he associated Theodosius in the government of the Empire. Both of them were of one mind in recognizing that they could not better assure the welfare of the State than by absolute faithfulness to the laws of the Church. The Arian or semi-Arian policy of Constantius and Valens had failed as egregiously as the pagan policy of Julian the Apostate. Gratian and Theodosius purposed making a firmly Catholic policy triumphant.

<sup>168</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 342 f.

# PART II CATHOLICISM, THE STATE RELIGION

#### PART II

#### Introductory Remarks

Never had circumstances seemed to presage a more prosperous future for the Church. When the genius of Constantine, with a sense of political realities and a loftiness of view which few statesmen have equaled, freed the Church from its fetters and prepared the way for its hegemony, the intellectual movement that was to give Christian thought incomparable teachers was scarcely outlined. Later, when men like Hilary, Basil, Ambrose, Jerome, and Chrysostom appeared, the lusterless successors of the great emperor brought to the pursuit of his work neither his vast intelligence nor his unwavering fidelity.

The closing years of the fifth century offer a more wonderful sight. Greatness is everywhere, both in the Christian pulpit and on the imperial throne. True, Theodosius in his government does not apply Constantine's firm balance; but he possesses a Christian spirit more detached from pagan influences. And St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Chrysostom, and St. Augustine reach the full maturity of their talent and give the world those treasures of scholarship, eloquence, and holiness which the Church has not again seen in such abundance in the course of the ages.

From 379 to 395 a series of more and more restrictive laws was enacted against paganism, concluding with an absolute prohibition of idolatrous practices. Eunomianism, Arianism, Apollinarianism, Priscillianism, Macedonianism, Manichaeism, all the heresies, are mercilessly condemned. The Christian religion triumphs in all the splendor of its worship and all the

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purity of its orthodoxy. From the death of St. Basil (379) to St. Augustine's installation as Bishop of Hippo (395), St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, St. Epiphanius, St. Paulinus of Nola, Didymus the Blind, Cassian, Rufinus, and St. Augustine himself fill the East and West with their masterpieces. In 381, the ecumenical Council of Constantinople confirms and completes the work of the Council of Nicaea.

Theodosius' death in 395 unfortunately arrests the advance of his work of Catholic propaganda and civilization. But the main results of his political and religious action do not perish. Although not every act of Theodosius the Great deserves the approval of a Christian conscience, there is no Roman emperor to whom the Church owes deeper gratitude, after Constantine the Great.

#### CHAPTER I

From the Death of Valens to the Council of Constantinople (379–381)

"THE promotion of Theodosius was received with universal approval. Although words of praise are not weighty on the lips of a poet, it is hard not to agree with Claudianus who says that the Empire would scarcely have arisen from the wretched state to which the inundation of barbarians reduced it, unless Theodosius had put his hand to the work and sustained it by his valor. Dacia, Thrace, and Illyberia were lost. The Goths, Alani, and Huns held part of them and had ravaged the rest. The Iberians, the Armenians, and the Persians were also in arms against the Romans." 1 "What evils are before our very eyes," exclaims St. Gregory, "and what evils that we learn of only by others' reports! Whole countries overturned from end to end, thousands of men put to death, the whole land red with blood, a foreign race traveling as master through a country that does not even understand their language! Let us not charge our soldiers with cowardice; they have given proof of their bravery; they have subjected the whole earth. But it is a punishment for our sins, for that Arian heresy which was so long dominant among us." 2

Theodosius' first care was to repair the disaster of Adrianople, to rebuild and strengthen the frontier dikes which had been swept away temporarily by the barbarian flood, and to deal separately with the chiefs of the rebel tribes so as to bring them back into the framework of the Roman administration.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tillemont, Histoire des empereurs (1701 ed.), V, 194.

<sup>2</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 14.

#### Condition of the Church

These undertakings were merely preliminary to a more difficult and more important work. Sozomen relates that Theodosius, shortly after being raised to the imperial office, asked for baptism from the holy Bishop of Thessalonica, Ascholius, and questioned the Bishop regarding the religious state of the Empire. Ascholius answered that the Churches of the West, as far as Macedonia, were united in the true faith, all of them adoring the Son and the Holy Ghost the same as the Father; but that all the Churches further east were divided into a large number of sects, that the Church was as much disturbed in that part of the Empire as was the State, and that the Arians were there in control of the churches in Constantinople, Antioch, and most of the big cities.<sup>3</sup>

Ascholius spoke truly. The countless fragments of the Arian heresies—Macedonian, Novatian, Apollinarian—were seething in convulsions that indicated vexation rather than vitality, but nevertheless were seriously disturbing the part of the Empire just confided to Theodosius.

### The Heretics

At Constantinople the Eunomians appeared more active and insolent than ever. St. Gregory of Nyssa describes their clamorous propaganda. "Everywhere," he says, "in the public squares, at crossroads, on the streets and lanes, people used to stop you and discourse at random about the Trinity. If you asked something of a money-changer, he would begin discussing the question of the Begotten and the Unbegotten. If you questioned a baker about the price of bread, he would answer that the Father is greater and the Son is subordinated to Him. If you went to take a bath, the Anomoean bath-

<sup>3</sup> Tillemont, op. cit., pp. 198 f.

attendant would tell you that in his opinion the Son simply comes from nothing. Must we say these people were out of their heads? At any rate heresy had upset their minds." 4

At Constantinople and in the Asiatic provinces of Bithynia, Paphlagonia, and Phrygia, the Novatians still had many capable leaders. Valens was a well instructed Novatian. In his reign Marcian, to whom the Emperor entrusted the education of his daughters Anastasia and Carosa, profited by his favor with the sovereign to obtain a moderation of the severe measures taken against the Novatians; <sup>5</sup> and the latter were able to spread their rigorist doctrines.

The various grim sects connected with Montanism settled by themselves in Phrygia near Pepuza. The Theodosian Code mentions their members under the names of Phrygians, Pepuzians, and Priscillianists. Other heretics, under the odd appellations of Saccophori, Apotactics, and Hydroparastates, indulged in the strangest practices. St. Epiphanius mentions, as belonging to the same school, the Messalians or Euchites, that is, "Praying folk."

"They were people who had renounced all their possessions; they lived entirely upon alms, and came and went, always praying and doing nothing else. When night came they slept anyhow, men and women together, and in the open air as far as possible. With the offices of the Church and the fasts they concerned themselves not at all. It was by prayer alone, and by an absolute detachment from the goods of this world, that they held communion with God and His saints—a communion so close that they did not hestitate to attribute to themselves the designations of angels, prophets, patriarchs, and Christs. According to them, baptism only effaces past sins; it does not prevent the indwelling in every man, from the time

<sup>4</sup> St. Gregory of Nyssa, De deitate Filii et Spiritus Sancti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Socrates, IV, 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, 5, 10, 40, 48, 57, 65. These were followers of the prophetess Priscilla. They are not the same as the Priscillianists of Spain, who will be mentioned infra.

of his birth, of an evil spirit with whom he has to struggle incessantly. This struggle against the evil spirits filled their minds to the exclusion of everything else; when it became very violent within them, they were seen to make gestures as though shooting arrows, or to jump into the air with enormous leaps, sometimes even beginning to dance." <sup>7</sup>

Neither the condemnations pronounced against the Messalians by Bishop Amphilochius of Iconium and by Bishop Flavian of Antioch nor the legislative measures following these condemnations overcame the sect. It continued to exist for a long time in Asia Minor.

Apollinarianism, which started as a scholastic dispute, had established itself at Antioch in the form of a party, when a friend of Apollinaris, named Vitalis, a priest of Meletius, decided to go over to the side of Paulinus. When Paulinus repulsed him because of his doctrines and Meletius would not take him back because of his defection, he organized a separate Church in the city and proclaimed himself its bishop. This made, along with Paulinus, Meletius, and the Arian Bishop Euzoios, four bishops in Antioch. From there, under the impulse of Vitalis and of Apollinaris himself, the Apollinarian party endeavored to spread out; it preached the doctrine of a Christ who was not perfectly man, founded two schismatic Churches in Berytus and Laodicea, and, after Valens' death, even tried to lay hands on the Church of Constantinople. The Council of Constantinople later separated it from the Catholic Church as heretical.

The Schism of Antioch became complicated by the election of Evagrius, whom Paulinus on his deathbed consecrated bishop without the presence of any other bishop. This irregularity and the mere fact that Evagrius obtained his election from Paulinus, caused him to be rejected by the followers

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 461.

of Flavian. In spite of efforts by Theodosius, the Schism of Antioch survived the death of Evagrius and even that of Flavian.

Besides open schisms and heresies, other troubles here and there disturbed the Church. The barbarians, incorporated in the Roman armies, brought their vague Arianism with them. Diodorus of Tarsus, in his reaction against Apollinarianism, ushered in the opposite exaggerations of Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Nestorius. Devout pilgrims to the Holy Land, such as Rufinus and Melania, were alarmed at seeing the Church of Jerusalem torn by internal strifes.

All in all, the danger to which all these disturbances exposed the Church was not formidable. Each day Arianism and Macedonianism were losing members. The Eunomians were divided among themselves. The oddity of the practices or tenets of several sects exposed them to ridicule. When the Arian Bishop Demophilus died, and his successor had a Syrian pastry-cook as his chief backer, the whole party was called the party of the pastry-cooks (*Psathyriani*).

## Authority of the Church

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, was a compact organization, strongly hierarchical, universally respected. In the West there was no strong schism, no formidable heresy. The Roman Church more and more justified the hegemony it held from Christ and from tradition by the services it rendered to the peace of the individual Churches and to the civilization of the world. Pope Damasus fixed the grades of a hierarchy which extended as strictly to the East as to the West. In fine, the union just established between the Pope and the Emperor was a new pledge of proximate triumph.

That is why public opinion, taken as a whole and in spite of difficulties, demanded that there be religious unity, centered

in the Roman See. "An irresistible public cry, springing from the ranks, not of Church dignitaries, but of the masses, called for vigorous remedies against religious divisions." 8 After all, religious unity was in the imperial traditions themselves. "In spite of all professions of toleration, none of the emperors of the fourth century, and Julian no more than the rest, had ever renounced the dream of religious unity." 9 It was evident to all that this unity could not be realized around a heresy. "Theodosius, however, was in the number of those statesmen who know how to become energetic and capable interpreters of the needs of their time. His genius was not of such as impose their will upon their age. His was a simple, upright mind, but one that would not, in any way, show itself either inventive or original. He did not have a moment's doubt that in taking the crown he had assumed the task of freeing minds from error as well as the land from invasion, and that these two duties could not be accomplished the one without the other. This conviction of his found no one to disagree with it." 10

# Theodosius' Religious Policy

"Theodosius," says Tillemont, "thought he should act with great reserve. As he did not wish to employ severity toward the heretics, many zealous members of the Church feared that he was not capable of repairing the losses the Church had suffered from the attacks of Valens, his predecessor. Even St. Gregory Nazianzen, though much inclined to moderation, could not say whether the Emperor showed lack of zeal or excessive timidity or wise prudence. The event seems to have decided in Theodosius' favor. For he entirely reëstablished

<sup>8</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 362.

<sup>9</sup> Duchesne, op. cit., II, 498.

<sup>10</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 363.

the Catholic faith and accomplished the overthrow of the heretics, not by forcing people to abandon their errors, but by gradually winning them and especially by openly declaring himself in favor of the true faith." <sup>11</sup>

The Emperor's religious policy is found clearly expressed in the edict he published February 28, 380. "It is our wish," he says, "that all peoples subject to the government of our clemency should abide in the religion as the divine Apostle Peter transmitted it to the Romans, and, as everyone knows, such as is even yet followed by the Pontiff Damasus and Peter bishop of Alexandria, men of apostolic holiness: so that, following the discipline of the Apostles and the teaching of the Gospel, we may all believe in the sole divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, united in one equal majesty and one holy Trinity. We order that those who follow this law be the only ones to take the name of Catholic Christians, and that all others who depart therefrom, in spite of every reason, bear the infamy of being called heretics; that their meetings be not called Churches, and that they be obliged to suffer the divine punishment and such penalties as heavenly inspiration may prompt us to inflict." 12

Theodosius did not forego favoring religion by wisely protective laws. But, for the spread of the Gospel, he counted mostly upon the Church, the zeal of its doctors, and the authority of its hierarchy.

#### Status of the Church

By granting official existence only to the Catholic Church and granting the heretics merely a legal tolerance, Theodosius was not introducing something new. Eusebius records an exhortation by Constantine addressed directly to the heretics

<sup>11</sup> Tillemont, op. cit., V, 199.

<sup>12</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, I, 2.

(Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Paulinianists, Montanists, and others), urging them to return to the Church. This exhortation had in view a law by which the dissenters are forbidden to hold religious meetings, and their common property, that had been usurped from the Catholic Church, must be returned to it.13 The law here referred to was not strictly and universally enforced. It was appealed to only when disturbances, incited by the heretics, seemed harmful to public order. Under such circumstances public opinion found government intervention guite natural. The Church protested only against what seemed to it to be an interference by the civil power in the ecclesiastical domain. The important fact was the official status granted to the great Church, the Catholic Church, and denied to the dissenting groups. "Hence came a State orthodoxy. The State was obliged to know which among the parties in conflict was the one that represented genuine Christianity, the one which it ought to acknowledge and to protect as such." 14

Ever since Constantine we have seen the Christian rulers making inquiries, intervening in the disputes, and convening the bishops in council. Theodosius adopted a simpler and surer means. For him, anyone was Catholic who was in communion with "the Pontiff Damasus," bishop of Rome. Never does Theodosius of himself determine a formulary of faith; never does he claim the right to depose a bishop. Those are Church affairs. In certain administrative measures it may be found that the sovereign went beyond the limits of his authority. But in the seventy laws included under the title *De haereticis* in the Theodosian Code, <sup>15</sup> we do not meet with a single contradiction of these principles. Of those laws one of the earliest (dated August 3, 379) <sup>16</sup> merely enforces the old law forbid-

<sup>13</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, III, 64-66.

<sup>14</sup> Duchesne, op. cit., II, 520.

<sup>15</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, v.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., XVI, v, 5.

ding heretics to hold meetings, a law which seems to have been suspended by Theodosius' predecessors.

It appears further that all of this religious legislation by Theodosius was more directive than coercive. The mere fact that several laws bear on the same subject is significant of this trait; at least it shows how leniently such decrees were executed. The same was not true of the laws whose direct purpose did not possess a penal character, those which merely sought to increase the respect due to Christ and His Church. Such, for instance, was the law which, in memory of the Savior's suffering, suspended the execution of any corporal punishment during Lent.

Moreover, it would be a mistake to attribute to Theodosius' laws the growing success of Catholicism toward the end of the fourth century.

"Henceforth its fate was sealed; the current was too strong for the State itself, with all its power, to be able to swim against it. Whether the emperor were favorable or not, Christianity was certain of success. When we remember that it did not cease to make progress in Africa, in spite of the stumbling-block of Donatism; that the Arian crisis, and bishops like Eusebius of Nicomedia, Stephen of Antioch, Gregory and George of Alexandria, and Eudoxius of Constantinople, did not prevent its conquest of the East, we can judge how much could be effected against it by official hostility or even by persecution." <sup>17</sup>

#### Priscillianism

In the West, under the rule of Emperor Gratian, the Priscillianist dispute confirmed this truth. There are few stories more dramatic than that of Priscillian and his teaching. Sulpicius Severus, who was a contemporary witness of the events he relates, says:

<sup>17</sup> Duchesne, op. cit., II, 496.

"Priscillian was born in Spain. He was a man of noble birth, of great riches, bold, restless, eloquent, learned, through much reading, ever ready at debate and discussion—in fact, altogether a happy man, if he had not ruined an excellent intellect by wicked studies. Undoubtedly, there were to be seen in him many admirable qualities both of mind and body. He was able to spend much time in watchfulness and to endure both hunger and thirst. He had little desire for amassing wealth, and he was most economical in the use of it. But at the same time he was a very vain man, and was much more puffed up than he ought to have been with the knowledge of merely earthly things. Moreover, it was believed that he had practiced magical arts from his boyhood. He, after having himself adopted the pernicious system referred to, drew into its acceptance many persons of noble rank and multitudes of the common people by the arts of persuasion and flattery which he possessed." 18

What was that pernicious doctrine? Sulpicius Severus connects it with Egyptian Gnosticism. If we are to accept the later testimony of Orosius, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and Pope St. Leo the Great, it gathered together the errors of almost all the heresies—Sabellianism, Marcionism, Manichaeism, Apollinarianism—and joined them, in a formless chaos, with several pagan superstitions. Eleven short writings of Priscillian were discovered by Dr. Schepss among the manuscripts of Würzburg University. Their publication in 1889 greatly disconcerted the historians. In them Priscillian appears to be opposing precisely several of the doctrines that were attributed to him. Besides, he therein shows a remarkable, though at times, disturbing talent. The reading of these works is made hard and interest is dissipated by a pliancy

<sup>18</sup> Sulpicius Severus, Chronicles, II, 46. Cf. Lavertujon, La Chronique de Sulpice-Sévère; Puech, Les Origines du priscillianisme, in the Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétienne, 1912, pp. 81–95, 161–213.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Schepss, Priscilliani quae supersunt (vol. XVIII of the Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum).

that becomes subtlety, by shades of meaning that become a play of colors, a labored quest of allegories." <sup>20</sup> However, a real knowledge of the Scriptures gives Priscillian "a place along with those who, in small numbers and to such extent as was possible to the spirit of the fourth century, engaged in questions of erudition and criticism." <sup>21</sup>

But it was not long before the leading defects of the enchanting writer were discovered. Priscillian does not hide his claim to interpret the Scriptures by the aid of divine inspiration. But "people are not so determined to establish the right of private interpretation when they have not a special doctrine to defend." 22 That tendency makes this Spanish exegete a precursor of Wyclif and Luther. Priscillian was also fond of repeating that the Books recognized as canonical presuppose others, that the four Gospels do not contain all the words of Jesus. By this declaration, Priscillian prepares his followers to accept eagerly most of the dubious legends which the Gnostics had connected with this or that Apostle. In fine, with an obstinacy to be found only in the men of Port Royal, Priscillian wanted to remain Catholic at all cost. When he is charged with Sabellianism, he anathematizes the Patripassians; accused of Manichaeism, he curses Mani." 23 Thus we can understand the presence of so many protestations of orthodoxy which abound in his writings. And what we can likewise understand is that, in the time of St. Augustine and St. Leo the Great, even at the time when Sulpicius Severus wrote his Chronicles—about the year 400—Priscillian himself as well as his disciples appeared in an unfavorable light to the faithful who cherished orthodoxy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Leclercq, L'Espagne chrétienne, p. 155.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>22</sup> Puech, in the Journal des savants, 1891.

<sup>28</sup> Leclercq, op. cit., p. 157.

#### Condemnation of Priscillianism

The foxy heretic was denounced and pursued by Idacius, bishop of Merida. The honest historian Sulpicius Severus sketches a far from flattering portrait of this prelate. He writes: "I can say that Idacius was without scruple or conscience. He was self-conceited, gossipy, brazen. So far did he carry his folly, that he incriminated, as an accomplice or disciple of Priscillian, any devout man who had a liking for study or who practiced long fasts. He even dared publicly to hurl a defamatory accusation of heresy against Martin, a man in every way comparable with the Apostles." Idacius accused Priscillian of using magical formulas. The accused protested vigorously. Two of his friends, Instantius and Salvianus, had recently been raised to the episcopacy; they backed Priscillian with all their might and even entered into a sort of conspiracy with him. Idacius then wrote to Pope Damasus. The Pontiff, probably distrustful both of the accuser and of the accused, replied with a strong recommendation that no steps should be taken against those who are not present and who have not been heard in their own defense (ne quid in absentes et inauditos decerneretur).24

A council, held at Saragossa in 380,25 condemned Priscillian, the two bishops (Instantius and Salvianus), and a layman (Helpidius).26 But the heretics refused to submit. And when the bishopric of Avila in Idacius' province became vacant, they even elected Priscillian, a layman, to be bishop of that see. Then, after inciting a movement against the Bishop of Merida, they denounced the latter to the Spanish episcopacy. The affair took on enormous proportions. It had more

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Schepps, Priscilliani quae supersunt, II, 35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> On this council, see Leclercy, L'Espagne chrétienne, pp. 172-175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Sulpicius Severus, *Chronicles*, II, 47: Priscillian's account is different, but less trustworthy.

far-reaching consequences through a step taken by Idacius. In concert with another Spanish bishop, Ithacius of Ossabona, he asked the intervention of the secular power and obtained from Emperor Gratian a rescript expelling the Priscillianists from all territories of the Empire.

## Appeal to Emperor Maximus

Instantius, Salvianus, and Priscillian met this appeal to the Emperor by an appeal to the Pope. They went to Rome, but reached there with such a cortege of scandalous followers that Damasus refused to see them. A series of intrigues was carried on between the two hostile groups until Emperor Maximus' entrance into the affair. After he had secured possession of the power in Britain, he invaded Gaul and settled victoriously at Treves. Through a clever memorial, filled with atrocious accusations, Ithacius forestalled Priscillian and won the new Emperor to his side. On a charge of magic, Priscillian was condemned to death and was executed along with six of his followers. A military commission was sent into Spain to hunt out his other accomplices and to inflict summary justice upon them.

Such severity aroused the indignation of the holy apostle of Gaul, Martin of Tours, at that time in the full prestige of his holiness. He was in Treves at the time of the trial. It may be that he went there for the purpose of trying to have justice administered with that prudence which Pope Damasus had advised.<sup>27</sup> He saw the Emperor and did not leave the city until he obtained Maximus' promise that no blood would be shed. After the execution, by way of protest he refused to hold communion with Ithacius and those of his party. Only once, says Sulpicius Severus, when urged to be present at the consecration of a holy bishop, Felix, did he decide to enter into

<sup>27</sup> Régnier, Saint Martin, p. 153.

communion with the Ithacians. But, until his death in 397, he regretted this misconstrued act of kindness. Although he was the most outstanding in the condemnation of the Priscillianist errors, he continually protested against an execution that was prompted by hatred rather than by a desire to defend the truth. Soon the Church, by solemn decisions of Pope Siricius and of the Council of Turin, gave striking approval to this conduct. Ithacius was deposed, and his followers were excommunicated.<sup>28</sup>

Without giving up her right to proscribe and repress heresies when they disturb the social order and the faith of her children, the Church has always thought that the first means she ought to use to assure the triumph of orthodox doctrine is the holiness of her ministers and the learning of her doctors. It was this same view that moved Emperor Theodosius to favor, with all his power, the holy bishops and scholarly defenders of the faith whom Providence raised up during his reign.

### St. Gregory Nazianzen

In the foremost rank of these men was Gregory Nazianzen. In 372, yielding to his father's urgent request, Gregory consented to be his auxiliary in the government of the Church of Nazianzus. But after the death of his father and mother—his brother Caesarius and his sister Gorgonia were already dead—with no near relatives living, with his heart crushed, and his health uncertain, in 375 he retired to the monastery of St. Thecla at Seleucia in Isauria. He there tasted those joys of the contemplative life for which he had so long yearned. Four years later the news of the death of his friend Basil strengthened his resolve to bid the world an eternal farewell and not to leave his beloved retreat except for heaven.

<sup>28</sup> Sulpicius Severus, Chronicles, II, 51.

"What am I doing here on earth," he said, "when the better half of me has been torn away? How much longer will my exile be prolonged?"

### Gregory in Constantinople

Even as he was thus bewailing the loss of his friend, the people and clergy of Constantinople were asking him to come to them. The Christians of the capital, so long oppressed by the Arians, saw the hope of a better future at Theodosius' coming into power. Lacking the great Basil, whom God had just called to Himself, they implored the help of Gregory. The influence of his eloquence and virtues seemed to them capable of rallying the flock of the faithful, of fortifying their courage against the snares of the heretics. Asked to reestablish discipline and faith in the greatest Church of the East, the humble Bishop, who had dreaded the office of ruling over an obscure diocese, had to appeal to all his virtues in order to accept the invitation.

He went to Constantinople. As the Arians had deprived the Catholics of all their churches, Gregory lived in the house of one of his relatives and there assembled the faithful. He rarely went out, made but few visits, and liked to remain alone at home, spending much time in prayer and study. The people soon venerated him as a saint and when he appeared in the pulpit, his eloquence won their hearts. We possess the principal sermons he preached on these occasions. They are known as his *Theological Discourses*. Their solidity and vigor have given Gregory Nazianzen the title of "Theologus" (the Divine). He took up the defense of the Christian faith against current errors. The Catholics flocked to him, as he himself puts it, "like parched people seeking a spring to slake their thirst." <sup>29</sup> The heretics and pagans also came to hear him,

<sup>29</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poems, I, 10.

some to learn, some to enjoy at least the charm of his words. In order to hear him at close range, people broke through the railing that enclosed the space where he was preaching.<sup>30</sup> His sermons were now and then interrupted by applause. While they were being delivered, they were written down by some of his hearers.<sup>31</sup>

In vain the Arians of every shade tried to sow discord among the faithful and thus offset the holy Bishop's influence. His thrilling eloquence triumphed over everything. His flock increased day after day, and the Catholic community in Constantinople breathed new life. Gregory turned the meeting-place into a chapel and called it the Anastasis, or the Resurrection. "It is this church," he said, "which has revived the word of God, so long despised in Constantinople. It is the place of our common victory. It is the new Silo, where at last the ark has found a fixed resting place." <sup>32</sup>

# Attacks upon Gregory

A time came when the Arians' wrath broke out. Easter 379, a band of heretics, under the guidance of ringleaders, went to the Anastasis and assaulted the faithful with stones, crying out: "Down with those who adore the three Gods!" Thus did they add calumny to this brutal attack. Gregory was wounded, and one of his people was left for dead. The holy man kept his friends from appealing to the Emperor. He told them: "We think it an important matter to obtain penalties for those who have wronged us. But it is far greater and more Godlike to bear with injuries. For the former course curbs wickedness, but the latter makes men good." 33

Frequently he employed such maxims. In one of his ser-

<sup>30</sup> Idem, Orations, 9, 32.

<sup>31</sup> Idem, Poems, 10.

<sup>32</sup> Idem, Oration 32.

<sup>33</sup> Idem, Letter 77.

mons, in which we sense that reciprocal sympathy uniting real preachers and their hearers, he said: "My children, do you know what is the best thing in the world? Let us examine the matter together. . . . I tell you it is peace. The Hebrews had a law forbidding the reading of certain books by people who were not yet very firm. Among us we should not allow anyone indiscriminately to be arguing all the time about the faith. We should not allow it especially in the case of those who are consumed with eagerness to lead the advance, those who flare up at the slightest difficulty, those who have a mania for talebearing. . . . To grasp divine things is so toilsome! To explain them is so laborious! Dear children, you do not know what a grace God bestows on you, enabling you to keep silent, whereas I am obliged to speak about subjects which are so great that they appal me." <sup>34</sup>

### Maximus the Cynic

Gregory's kindliness was marked by frankness. Certain plotters took advantage of this. One day a strange man arrived in Constantinople. He wore the white cloak, long hair dyed red, and carried the big staff of the Cynic philosophers. His name was Maximus. He really belonged to the sect whose costume he wore. But at the same time, according to his own account, he professed the purest Christianity. He had, so he said, even confessed the faith in a persecution. Gregory accepted these declarations as true, received the newcomer at his table, surrounded him with veneration, and even lauded him publicly.<sup>35</sup>

But Maximus, while thus deceiving the unsuspicious holy bishop, hatched an infamous conspiracy against him. The impostor's scheme was nothing less than to supplant Gregory in

<sup>34</sup> Idem, Oration 32.

<sup>85</sup> See Idem, Oration 25.

the see of Constantinople. Having, by some means or other, previously won the confidence of the patriarch Peter of Alexandria, he had him send from the Egyptian capital seven chosen men, who were to guarantee his claims. At the same time he gathered about him a large number of sailors from the imperial fleet, bribed some intimate acquaintances of Gregory, and, choosing a time when the latter was sick, entered with his band of followers into the Anastasis church. There some bishops then started to consecrate him bishop. In the midst of such a gathering, the ceremony did not progress without tumult. Word of it spread in the city. The people came running. Maximus and his friends fled to the house of a flute-player and there the ordination was continued.

Once again Gregory found that, although he had all the qualities that attract the good will of upright souls, he had none of those gifts which enable one to foil the craftiness of the wicked. Mortified by his mistake, striking his breast, and heaping maledictions upon himself, he tried to return to his solitude. But he found himself opposed by the demands of his whole people, who begged him to remain at their head, exclaiming: "If you go away, the Trinity will go with you." He then consented merely to take a rest required by his ill health. Soon afterwards he came back to Constantinople and resumed his interrupted ministry. In November 380, Emperor Theodosius arrived in Constantinople. Coming up to Gregory and embracing him, he said: "God employs me to put you at the head of this Church. I think the body of the faithful would do me violence if I refused to grant their most earnest wish." 36

#### Theodosius Evicts the Arians

The Emperor wished to preside in person at Gregory's installation.<sup>37</sup> First, however, he called upon Demophilus, the

<sup>36</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poems, I.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Gregory was already a bishop. Therefore no ordination ceremony was needed.

Arian bishop, to declare his adherence to the Nicene faith, or else, he and his priests, to abandon all the churches of the city. Demophilus refused to accept the Creed of the great Council. When all the churches occupied by the heresy had been vacated, Theodosius, in the morning of November 26, had the great Church of Saint Sophia occupied by his troops. Then, placing Gregory in the middle of an escort, he himself directed the procession to the church. Let us quote Gregory's own account of his feelings.

"A heavy fog covered the city like a sinister veil. Around the basilica, the throng of Arians, evicted from their temple, murmured as though preparing for an outbreak. Cries of rage against me were heard from the midst of the crowd. The Emperor, surrounded by officers, came out of the palace. I preceded him, pale, trembling, scarcely breathing. On all sides I saw nothing but angry and threatening looks, and I turned my own gaze steadfastly to heaven. Theodosius, calm and undisturbed, advanced. At length, hardly knowing how I reached there, I found myself within the basilica. Then prostrating myself and raising my hands to heaven, I intoned, with all the clergy, a canticle of thanksgiving. At that moment, by a heavenly favor, the sun, scattering the clouds, lighted up the temple with a radiant brightness. You would have said that the empire of darkness was at last yielding to the light of Christ. The tabernacle sparkled with a thousand flashes. A unanimous shout burst forth like thunder. 'Gregory the bishop,' said the throng, of a sudden converted. This cry was repeated continually."

"Gregory wanted to stand up to stop this outburst. But he had not the strength to do so. One of his priests, who was beside him, conveyed these words to those present: 'Enough shouting, my friends. Today is the time to offer thanks to God. Afterwards there will be time to think of the rest.' A murmur of approval greeted this final effort at resistance by van-

quished humility. The divine service was performed without further disturbance. It was on the following day that Gregory, while still protesting that he did not consider his selection final until it should be confirmed by a council, consented to take his place on the episcopal throne." 38

From that day the Anastasis chapel was abandoned. Gregory's eloquence henceforth resounded in the Church of Saint Sophia. Shortly afterwards the ecumencial Council of Constantinople declared the nullity of Maximus' ordination and canonically proclaimed Gregory bishop of Constantinople. In that capacity, after the death of Meletius, he presided over the great council of 381.

Thus, after half a century of Arian usurpation, the churches of Constantinople were restored to the Catholic clergy without a drop of blood being shed. Only the preaching of St. Gregory Nazianzen made this result possible. In Milan, Nyssa, and Cappadocia, in the neighboring solitudes of Antioch, in Alexandria, and in the city of Constantinople itself, along with St. Gregory under the benevolent protection of Theodosius and Gratian, a similar work was performed by the preaching and writings of St. Ambrose, St. Gregory of Nyssa, Didymus the Blind, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Jerome.

# St. Ambrose, Imperial Counsellor

Since the death of Valens and the partition of the Empire between Gratian and Theodosius, Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, had become the confidant of the young Emperor of the West. It may well be that the desire to profit by the advice of Ambrose was the chief motive prompting Gratian to leave Treves and take up his residence in Milan. "Gratian brought to Milan all the anxieties of inexperienced youth and a timorous conscience. Ambrose, in consequence of the public offices

<sup>38</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 410.

he had held, combined sacerdotal authority and well-tried political ability. Soon the intimacy was complete between the Emperor and the Bishop. The imperial palace was familiarly open to Ambrose. The previously weak and hesitant conduct of the young prince assumed a consistency and firmness evidenced by his principal legislative acts. But Ambrose's influence is especially evident in certain measures of a religious character, the purpose of which was to free the Church from annoying prescriptions that still hindered her development or to remove from official acts whatever traces and memories of idolatry they retained." <sup>39</sup>

These responsibilities did not keep Ambrose from pursuing his intellectual labors. On the eve of the battle of Adrianople, he published some books on virginity and two books on the faith. Between 379 and 381, by the publication of two new books he completed his treatise *De Fide*, and he brought out three exegetical works on Genesis (*De Paradiso*, *De Cain et Abel*, *De Noe et arca*), and wrote his important book *De Spiritu Sancto*.

#### Writings on Morals

Throughout his life Ambrose liked to celebrate the merits of virginity. So true was this that, as he tells us, it brought him objections and complaints.<sup>40</sup> But these never kept him from proclaiming, in the midst of the pagan world, the praises of a virtue which he could not speak of without feeling. Says St. Jerome: "In his *De Virginibus* Ambrose has poured forth his soul with such a flood of eloquence that he has sought out, set forth, and put in order all that bears on the praise of virgins." <sup>41</sup> "A virgin," says Ambrose, "is a gift of God, the

<sup>39</sup> Idem, Saint Ambroise, pp. 38 f.

<sup>40</sup> St. Ambrose, De virginitate, chap. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 22, no. 22, To Eustachium (*Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 31; P. L., XXII, 409).

joy of her parents; at home she exercises the priesthood of chastity." <sup>42</sup> Yet he never speaks disparagingly of marriage. "Marriage," he writes, "is lawful for all Christians; virginity is the portion of only a small number. And we must even acknowledge that virginity would lack subjects to enter into that state unless marriage supplied them." <sup>43</sup>

"St. Ambrose, the better to praise virginity, ridicules the luxury of the unchaste. The apostle becomes a satirist. He makes fun of those women who, by the use of facial paint, endeavor to appear different from what they are. See this one coming along, like a statue on a throne. People look at her as they would at some strange object. Her efforts to make herself attractive merely make her ugly. Her ears are torn and her head is bent as though under a burden. Her neck carries a chain, although the chain be of gold. Happy are you virgins, who are free from these tortures, you whose beauty is formed by modesty, a beauty that need not fear the weather, a beauty which is the only sort pleasing to God." 44

### Exegetical Works

In the writings on the earthly Paradise, on Cain and Abel, and on Noe and his ark, which appeared about 380, Ambrose endeavors to explain successively the literal and the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures. As Dom Ceillier remarks, "Ambrose does this with as much exactness as eloquence and nobility. His style is natural. The allegories are appropriate and interesting. The thoughts, living and elevated. Few of Ambrose's works are more finished than the book *De Noe et arca.*" 45 "St. Ambrose takes a great deal from Philo and the

<sup>42</sup> St. Ambrose, *De virginitate*, chap. 7. "From this we see," says Ceillier, "that Milan then had no convent for women; but there was one at Bologna, as appears later in St. Ambrose's work." Ceillier, *Histoire des auteurs sacrés*, V, 447.

<sup>48</sup> St. Ambrose, De virginibus, I, 7.

<sup>44</sup> Thamin, St. Ambroise et la morale chrétienne au IV · siècle, p. 345.

<sup>45</sup> Ceillier, op. cit., V, 399.

Greek Fathers, which he read in their original language." <sup>46</sup> In numerous passages his imitation of the Alexandrian Jew is such that frequently it is possible to restore the rather ill-preserved text of Philo's writings by the aid of parallel passages from the Bishop of Milan. Philo, being of an eclectic mind, represented rather well what Christian theology could utilize from the Eastern philosophy. He offset and complemented the influence that Cicero exercised upon Ambrose. "The meeting of these two influences is a very exact though reduced image of the greatest moral fact of our history, the alliance brought about by Christian thought between the philosophy of the East and that of the West." <sup>47</sup> From this point of view, St. Ambrose continued the work of St. Hilary and St. Jerome, and prepared the way for that of St. Augustine.

## Dogmatic Works

On the Trinitarian question the Bishop of Milan in his two works (*De Fide ad Gratianum* and *De Spiritu Sancto*), published between 378 and 384 at the request of Emperor Gratian, occupies the same intermediary position. The Easterners had said: "The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father by the Son."

"The formula (a Patre per Filium) was susceptible of various interpretations. One might look upon the Son as a sort of medium through which the Father's substance is communicated to the Holy Spirit, or again might represent the Son as a true and active principle which, together with the Father, produces the Holy Spirit." <sup>48</sup>

Beginning with St. Augustine, the Latin theology unanimously adopted the latter interpretation, and reached the

<sup>46</sup> Dictionnaire de la Bible, I, 451.

<sup>47</sup> Thamin, op. cit., pp. 94, 96.

<sup>48</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 269.

following formula: "The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and from the Son." In Ambrose we do not yet find this clearness. He uses the word *procedere*, but this he does solely to express the Holy Ghost's mission *ad extra*. He is satisfied to teach, after Hilary and Jerome, but more clearly than they do, that the Son is the *principium* of the Holy Ghost. 50

In the East, under the auspices of Theodosius, the Cappadocian doctors performed a similar work. During the period we are now treating, Gregory of Nyssa was its most illustrious representative.

### St. Gregory of Nyssa

In 372, against his inclination, Gregory was elevated to the see of Nyssa through the intervention of his brother Basil, at the same time that his friend Gregory Nazianzen was chosen Bishop of Sasima. He governed his little diocese in peace until an Arian conspiracy drove him out with violence. He then began a wandering existence in which he was much consoled by affectionate letters from Gregory Nazianzen.<sup>51</sup> Basil thought of enlisting his brother's coöperation in his apologetic labors. But the Bishop of Caesarea's wish was not fulfilled until after his death.

The Arians, upon the death of their dread foe, took courage and even were so bold as to attack his writings. "Gregory took up his pen and did not stop until he had written his *Hexameron* to defend and supplement his brother's *Hexameron*. And he wrote his *Books against Eunomius* to confirm Basil's *Books against Eunomius*. Basil had been foremost a theologian, taking Scripture and Apostolic tradition as his basis and not making any use of the classical philosophy of the schools ex-

<sup>49</sup> St. Ambrose, De Spiritu Sancto, P. L., XVI, 762.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., P. L., XVI, 769, 800.

<sup>51</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Letters 72, 73, 74.

cept insofar as it could be of use in refuting the sophists. Gregory, on the other hand, was a philosopher, delighting in subtle analyses, pushing reason as far as possible into the darkness of mystery. Such a nature had some relationship with that of Origen. He was not afraid to make daring attempts. He has been accused of holding the error of the great Alexandrian on the non-eternity of the pains of hell." <sup>52</sup> St. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, maintained that Gregory's writings were interpolated by the Origenists. <sup>53</sup> If this explanation is sound, Gregory's orthodoxy is vindicated. <sup>54</sup>

### Doctrine about the Holy Ghost

It is particularly in his statement of the dogma of the Trinity that Gregory of Nyssa's thought seems to accomplish a happy fusion of the Greek conception and the Latin conception. Faithful to the Eastern tradition, he conceived the Trinitarian procession as developing, if we may so speak, along a straight line, the Father communicating His substance to the Son, and through Him to the Holy Ghost, in the manner of three flames, the first one communicating its light to the second and through this lighting the third. <sup>55</sup> But, by clearly contrasting the Holy Ghost with both the Father and the Son, he taught, almost as explicitly as the Latins, the procession *ab utroque*. He says:

"There is indeed no difference between one light and another light, qua light, when the one shows no lack or diminution of illuminating grace, but by its complete perfection forms part of the highest light of all, and is beheld along with the Father and the Son, though counted after them, and by its own power gives access to the

<sup>52</sup> Régnon, Études de théologie positive sur la sainte Trinité, III, 41.

<sup>53</sup> P. G., XLIV, 51, and 9 note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> On this charge, see Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 304.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> St. Gregory of Nyssa, Adversus Macedonianos, 6.

light that is perceived in the Father and Son to all who are able to partake of it."  $^{56}$ 

With these first works Gregory of Nyssa's style takes on that splendor and harmony which posterity would admire in the writings of the great bishop. Says a critic who is a good judge of fine language, "No rhetorician uses so brilliant language, so agreeable to the ear, as the brother of the great Basil." <sup>57</sup>

# Didymus the Blind

Endowed with less original and less brilliant talent, was a disciple of the Cappadocians, a man who holds a second rank in theology,<sup>58</sup> Didymus the Blind. But he made a notable contribution to the pacifying work in which Ambrose and Gregory of Nyssa were the most illustrious representatives.

Didymus never received holy orders. Born in 313 <sup>59</sup> at Alexandria, he was only four years old, according to the author of the *Lausiac History*, <sup>60</sup> when he lost his sight. Says Rufinus: "Didymus was able to combine study and prayer. He used his long vigils, not in reading, but in listening, so that his ear taught him what the eye teaches others. And when, in this night labor, sleep overcame the readers, Didymus, instead of profiting by their silence to take some rest himself, ruminated on what he had heard. Thus in his mind and memory he reconstructed the whole substance of the long readings he had been listening to. Everything he heard, he seemed to write on the tablets of his mind." <sup>61</sup> His contemporaries regarded

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Idem, Against Eunomius, bk. 1, chap. 36. Cf. Petau, Dogmata theologica, bk. 7, chap. 3, no. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Photius, in P. G., XLIV, 45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> This is what Gustave Bardy proves, against the excessive praise by Leitpoldt. Bardy, *Didyme l'Aveugle*.

<sup>59</sup> Bardy, op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Palladius, Lausiac History, chap. 4. Cf. St. Jerome, Chronicles, year of Abraham 2388. The Lausiac History, relating the lives of early monks, is thus called from the name of Lausius, an officer of Theodosius the Younger, to whom it was dedicated.

<sup>61</sup> Rufinus, Ecclesiastical History, II, 7.

his theological knowledge as wonderful. But aside from that, his writings reveal a certain acquaintance with profane sciences and a familiarity with the classical poets. His works abound in quotations from them. Palladius relates that St. Antony, the famous hermit, often consulted Didymus. Jerome and Rufinus went to him to learn the precepts and examples of the perfect life.

Didymus' principal guide was Origen, but, with his calm and moderate spirit, he liked also to follow the theology of the great Cappadocians. He was particularly devoted to the study of the dogma of the Trinity. "What especially characterizes Didymus is not a formula, but something better, a certain state of mind, a certain piety, which is reflected all through his work. The mark of that piety is the adoration of the one and indivisible Trinity. . . . His doctrine is primarily an expression of his piety, not at all an intellectual attempt to offer a rational explanation of his belief." 62

The first of his works (On the Holy Ghost) appeared in 381, and was followed by his book On the Trinity. St. Jerome, requested by Pope Damasus to write an exposition of the Catholic doctrine on the Holy Ghost, thought the best he could do would be to translate the work of Didymus the Blind. Says Bardenhewer: "This work, is indeed, one of the best of its kind in Christian antiquity." <sup>63</sup> If Jerome's translation is a literal one, Didymus clearly proclaims the doctrine of the procession ex Filio. <sup>64</sup>

St. John Chrysostom and St. Jerome, as philosophers and theologians, do not rank with the doctors we have been citing. They occupy a secondary place in the history of dogma. But their place is incomparable in the history of the moral reformation of the fourth century. Between 379 and 381 Chrysostom

<sup>62</sup> Bardy, op. cit., pp. 106 f.

<sup>68</sup> Bardenhewer, op. cit., p. 308.

<sup>64</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, or.

brought out his *Treatise on the Priesthood*, his *Letter to a* Young Widow, and his Consolation to Stagirius; and Jerome published his translation and continuation of Eusebius' Chronicles.

#### St. John Chrysostom

The endless conflicts stirred up by the heresies of the fourth century not only disturbed men's minds; they also profoundly upset public and private morals in the bosom of the Church. The *Treatise on the Priesthood*, published (381) when the deacon Chrysostom fled from the episcopacy and the priesthood, aimed to show the clergy and laity the ideal of that holy ministry, of which he declared himself unworthy. Such a book came at the right time. The duties which burdened the clergy, especially the bishops, in the second half of the fourth century, had increased day by day. By his office of "defender of the city" and by the development which ecclesiastical jurisdiction underwent, the head of a Church became a sort of patron in things temporal as well as in things spiritual.

In one of his homilies, which is of great value to the historian, Chrysostom gives a list of the activities to which he must attend. They obliged him to have a regular budget. The distribution of alms to the poor, the care of widows and virgins, the building of the first hospitals for the sick and the lepers, the construction of the first asylums, the visiting of prisoners, the intervention with government agents in behalf of the many victims of government tyranny, occupied every moment that was left to a bishop by the sacred ceremonies, the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and the spiritual management of his diocese.

The enormity of these burdens made Chrysostom recoil from the episcopacy. Certain unfortunate examples, showing

 $<sup>^{65}</sup>$  St. Chrysostom, Homily 21 on the First Epistle to the Corinthians. (P. G., LXI, 180; Oxford Library, IV, 293.)

him the dangers attached to such duties, made him the more apprehensive. True, all bishops were not like Theophilus of Alexandria, who spent in magnificent buildings the alms intended for the poor; nor like Gerontius of Nicomedia who reached the bishopric because he had acquired in the city a reputation as a capable and obliging physician and who gave the impression of being a man of the world rather than a bishop. The example of Basil of Caesarea making his metropolis a city of immense charitable works, was not an isolated instance. But we must admit that, since the time when Christianity came into honor, cabal and intrigue introduced into the ranks of the clergy more than one scandalous member. Later on, when Chrysostom deposed simoniacal bishops, he heard them declare, with unconscious cynicism, that, since they had expended large sums of money to obtain the episcopacy, they wanted to repay the money advanced to them. It was such immoral practices that Chrysostom determined to resist. 66

#### Ideal of the Priesthood

His treatise *On the Priesthood*, divided into six books and written in the form of a dialogue between himself and Basil, is one of the most perfect of the great doctor's writings. He wants to repress the ambition of bad priests and, on the other hand, to restrain the intractability of the laity. With this two-fold purpose in mind, he sets forth to both clergy and people, with impressive warmth of feeling and loftiness of thought, the greatness of the Christian priesthood. He says:

"The priesthood, though it be administered upon earth, is nevertheless to be placed in the rank of heavenly functions. No mortal man or any other created power, but the Holy Ghost Himself, hath

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> On the condition of the clergy in St. Chrysostom's time, see Puech, S. Jean Chrysostome et les mœurs de son temps. From this valuable work we have taken some of these details.

established this sacred Order. . . . He, therefore, that celebrates the holy mysteries ought to be pure, as though he were even now standing in heaven, in the midst of those celestial powers. . . . When you see our Lord sacrificed and lying in open view; when you see the priest standing by the sacrifice and repeating over it the prayer of consecration; when you see the communicants tinged and reddened, as it were, with that precious blood; can you yet imagine yourself to stand upon earth and to be amongst men? . . . The priest brings not fire from heaven (like Elias), but the Holy Spirit; and he offers a long supplication, not that a torch let down from above may consume the gifts; but that grace, descending on the sacrifice, may thereby inflame the souls of all that are present, and make them brighter than silver purified in the fire. . . . As the priests ought to be more venerable in our eyes than kings and princes, so we should honor them with a greater respect than we pay even to our natural parents. . . . For the priests are authors to us of a divine birth, of that blessed regeneration, of true liberty, and the adoption of grace." 67

Summing up the struggles which a priest must wage against the powers of evil, for self-sanctification and the sanctification of others, Chrysostom makes use of a comparison which shows him to be a great orator.

He says:

"Set before the eyes of your imagination a formidable army. Let the plains and mountains be covered with troops of horse and foot. Fancy that you see the splendor of shields and helmets, whose burnished brass reflects an illustrious blaze from the sunbeams. Let the rattling of spears and the neighing of horses strike the heavens with their noise. Opposite to these, let the enemy stand in battle array, men fierce and cruel. And let the time of the engagement be at hand.

"Then imagine that you see a country youth, one brought up to nothing but the shepherd's crook and pipe, snatched on a sudden

<sup>67</sup> St. Chrysostom, The Priesthood, bk. 3.

out of the field and accoutred with shining armor. Fancy that you see him carried through the army, and let everything there be presented to his view. Let him be shown the several companies and their leaders: the bowmen, the slingers, the tribunes and centurions, the heavy armed foot and light horse, the archers. Let them show him the adverse army, drawn up in order of battle. Let him see their terrible countenances, the various and vast collection of their arms. . . . Show him also the calamities of war: clouds of javelins; arrows falling like hail; dust blinding the eyes; blood running in streams; the groans of men dying and wounded; heaps of dead bodies; chariot-wheels dipt in blood; horses, with their riders falling headlong over heaps of human gore, javelins, and darts. . . . To these dismal scenes of war, add the miseries of captivity, a slavery worse than death itself.

"And, after he hath had a clear view of all these things, bid him mount on horseback and take upon him the command of the whole army. Do you think that so raw a youth would be equal to so great a charge, or would he not rather be ready to give up the ghost, at the very prospect of these things?

"Think not that by this description I exceed the truth. Could you discern the legions of the prince of darkness, and the furious onsets of the devil, you would see a warfare much greater and more terrible than that which I have now represented. Were it possible for us, either putting off this body of flesh or remaining with it, to see clearly and without fear the forces of that evil spirit drawn up, and the war which he wages against us, you would behold not rivers of blood, not dead bodies, but so many ruins of lost souls, and wounds so terrible, that all that description of war which I just now gave you would seem but a ludicrous thing, a mere sport and pastime of children.

"At this, Basil burst into tears more than before; and, rising up to go, I embraced him cordially; and, waiting on him to the door, I exhorted him to bear with courage what had befallen him. 'For I make no doubt,' said I, 'but, by the performance of this sacred ministration, you will obtain so great an interest with Christ, who

hath thus called you and set you over his flock, that at the last day you will be able to rescue even me also from the midst of my dangers and take me with you into the everlasting tabernacles." <sup>68</sup>

#### Deaconesses

Among those whom the priests assisted and whose services they also employed in the exercise of works of charity, were the widows. These were not all equally worthy of esteem. "Some there were who excelled in intrigue, who insinuated themselves into wealthy families and there artfully managed, by embroiling some and reconciling others, so as to turn it all to their own profit." 69 But many of them deserved the highest praise. Chrysostom, in his Letter to a Young Widow, 70 speaks of those "who quenched all the desires of the flesh; who not only restrained concupiscence, but trampled it under foot, cast it on the ground, and reduced it to utter powerlessness." He praises their resignation, their calmness of mind, their assiduity at church, and the edifying example of their life. "It was among these holy widows that the Church recruited its deaconesses, and among the deaconesses that Chrysostom found the most remarkable instances of devotedness. Before leaving Constantinople, just as he was giving himself up to the official who was appointed to take him into exile, it was to them he addressed his last advice and his farewell." 71

# Chrysostom's On Consolation

While the deacon Chrysostom was thus setting forth the ideal of priests and of women devoted to good works, he did not forget the evils affecting the faithful. Among Christians

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., bk. 6.

<sup>69</sup> Puech, op. cit., p. 241.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> P. G., XLVIII, 599-610.

<sup>71</sup> Puech, op. cit., p. 242.

of the leisured class in the fourth century, many were suffering from "that disease of advanced society, which arises from doubt and pride, an ailment that has been treated or rather described under the name of melancholy." The Stagirius, one of his friends, afflicted with this ailment, fell into a gloomy discouragement. Chrysostom, in his *Oratio adhortatoria ad Stagirium*, and evil more to be dreaded than the devil. Its germs he perceives in selfishness, and as a remedy for it he suggests the practice of good works.

He says to his friend: "Go to the one who is in charge of the service of strangers and arrange to be brought to the place where the sick are, that you may behold every kind of suffering. After that go to the prison. Go to the public baths and stop at the porch where you will see pitiful wretches stretched out almost naked, suffering from the cold and imploring pity from passers-by by the mere trembling of their body, because they have not strength to speak or stretch out their hand. . . . You will tell me that all these ills I am speaking of affect only the body, and that your malady is more severe because it reaches to the very soul. Alas, the maladies I speak of do indeed start with the body, but they do not stop there; they reach the very soul, disturbing it continually and impairing it through pain and dejection." In these touching words we already hear the eloquence of him who one day would become the fearless advocate of the poor before the wealthy class of Antioch.

To find inspiration for such views, Chrysostom needed merely to read the Scriptures attentively, calling to mind the charity of the first members of the Church. At that very time (about 380), Jerome, absorbed in the study of Christian antiquity, published, under the auspices of Emperor Theo-

<sup>72</sup> Villemain, Tableau de l'éloquence chrétienne au IVe siècle (1856 ed.), p. 156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> P. G., XLVII, 423-494.

dosius, the Latin translation of the Bible with the greatest possible exactness.

In Rome, Pope St. Damasus was undertaking labors which, by direct exhortation or by recalling Christian antiquity, might bring about the tranquillity of minds and the reform of morals. He himself contributed to this end by celebrating the praise of the early saints and martyrs. In a Roman synod (380) he rejoiced at seeing the Emperors grant the divinely founded Church its proper freedom in matters of administration and other legitimate activities.<sup>74</sup>

The concern of the two Emperors, as also that of the Supreme Pontiff, was to pacify men's minds in the full truth of Catholic dogma and to reform the practices of the time by its pure moral teaching. To all three of them it seemed these aims could be fully realized only by the meeting of a council that would confirm and complete the decisions of Nicaea.

# Council of Constantinople (381)

From the accounts of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret we learn that the first steps for the calling of a council at Constantinople were taken by Theodosius in 380.<sup>75</sup> According to those same authors, it had a threefold purpose: to confirm the faith of Nicaea; <sup>76</sup> to establish a bishop at Constantinople; <sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Mansi, III, 624.

<sup>75</sup> The document on which some historians base their opinion that Pope Damasus convoked this council, relates to the Council of Constantinople of 382, not to that of 381. See Hefele I, 9 f., II, 343. Yet it would be rash to say that the pope had nothing to do with the meeting of the council. It may well be that he positively sanctioned its convocation, or even suggested it. Theodosius had just formally declared the autonomy of the Holy See in spiritual matters, and a year later has recourse to the pope for the convocation of the council of 382. We may rightly suppose that he did not act without the pope's assent in 381. Further, Damasus presently confirms the decisions of the council of 381 and gives it a sovereign authority. He would hardly have acted thus for a council assembled contrary to or without his approval.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Socrates, V, 8; Sozomen, VII, 6.

<sup>77</sup> Socrates, loc. cit.; Sozomen, loc. cit.; St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poems, 12.

to issue regulations calculated to strengthen the peace which the Church began to enjoy since the coming of Theodosius.<sup>78</sup> This ruler, to make the assembly as imposing as possible, sent letters to all the bishops of his realm, that is, of the East, directing them to come. In the hope of leading the Macedonians back to the Church, the Emperor invited their bishops to the Council. They came to the number of thirty-six. Nearly all of them belonged to the region of the Hellespont.<sup>79</sup> The most famous were Eleusius bishop of Cyzicus and Marcian bishop of Lampsacus.

The Council began its sessions in May 381.80 It concluded its labors in July of that same year.81 The number of orthodox bishops in attendance including those from Egypt, who were present only at the later sessions, was about a hundred and fifty.82 The most celebrated orthodox bishops were the following: Meletius of Antioch, who reached Constantinople a little while before the Council began, to install Gregory Nazianzen in the see of that city; Ascholius of Thessalonica, who a short time before had baptized Emperor Theodosius; Helladius, recently made bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; St. Basil's two brothers (Gregory of Nyssa and Peter of Sebaste), and his old friend Amphilochius of Iconium.

#### St. Meletius of Antioch

By right the presidency of the Council belonged to the patriarch of Alexandria, Timotheus. But, as he did not arrive in time for the first session, his place was taken by Meletius patriarch of Antioch without any opposition. The Emperor

<sup>78</sup> St. Chrysostom, Oration 45.

<sup>79</sup> Socrates, V, 8; Sozomen, VII, 8.

<sup>80</sup> Socrates, loc. cit.

<sup>81</sup> Mansi, III, 557; Tillemont, Mémoires (1728 ed.), vol. 9, St. Gregory Nazianzen, note 41, p. 1338.

<sup>82</sup> Socrates, *loc. cit.*; Sozomen, *loc. cit.* We have a list of the bishops who attended this council. It contains 147 names. (Mansi, III, 568-572.)

was present at the opening of the Council. He heaped honors upon the president. Theodoret relates that, when Theodosius was as yet only a general, in a dream he saw a bishop clothing him with the imperial mantle and placing a crown on his head. The features of the bishop remained fixed in his memory. When the bishops who had come for the Council were presented to him, Theodosius immediately recognized Meletius as the one who had mysteriously appeared to him. He greeted him respectfully and, after repeatedly embracing him according to Eastern custom, he told him his wonderful dream.<sup>83</sup> The Emperor accorded all sorts of honors to the other bishops and requested them to exercise a spirit of conciliation in discussing the questions that would engage their attention.<sup>84</sup>

Thereafter the Emperor did not again appear in the Council. It seems that he did not even have a representative there, unless perhaps a police officer who was present to maintain order. But even such a one is not mentioned by any historian. Outside the conciliar meetings Theodosius showed the same respectful discretion. To those who brought him denunciations against certain bishops, he replied: "That is not my affair. To summon a bishop to my tribunal would be to dishonor the priesthood." 85

# Maximus the Cynic

The first matter submitted to the Council was the question about the see of Constantinople. The scandalous ordination of Maximus the Cynic was pronounced null as being contrary to the canon law. The first consequence of this decision was a declaration of the invalidity of all the ordinations performed by him. As a further consequence, it seemed that charges

<sup>83</sup> Theodoret, Ecclesiastical History, V, 6.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., V, 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Theodosian Code, XI, XXXIX, 9. This law is the fragment of the report of one of the sessions of the imperial consistory.

should be preferred against the consecrating bishops. But those prelates were absent. Gregory Nazianzen, ever ready to plead the cause of mercy and pardon, said it was not fair to condemn them without hearing them, and that the Council should not, by a condemnation, sadden the beginning of the pacifying work it was about to undertake. The Council yielded to these arguments. But they invited Gregory himself to accept the post left vacant by the deposition of Maximus. Appealing to the desire for harmony which he had just expressed, they pointed out to him that, as bishop of the capital, he could more effectively help to end the Meletian Schism. Gregory, who had always declared that he left to the decision of a council the confirmation of his powers as bishop at Constantinople, could not avoid the responsibility which they laid upon him. 86

#### The Meletian Schism

The crisis afflicting the Syrian capital threatened to assume disturbing proportions. The Greeks, for the most part, stood by Meletius; the Latins declared themselves for Paulinus. The peace, which was the object of such earnest effort, between East and West, might now be hindered by a petty question of persons.

An unexpected event suddenly complicated the situation of the Church of Antioch and that of the Council itself. This was the death of Meletius. By his personal qualities no less than by the authority which he derived from the Emperor's favor, he seemed to be the president intended by Providence for the forthcoming disputes. "Meletius," says St. Gregory Nazianzen, "won respect and induced others without compulsion, having as much honey in his character as in the syllables of his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> This was an exception to the rule that did not allow a bishop to pass from one see to another. Gregory had merely assisted his venerable father at Nazianzus, but he was bishop of Sasima.

name." The Council was about to begin the discussion regarding the divinity of the Holy Ghost and to try to bring back the semi-Arians on the basis of an orthodox formula. Just then Meletius, suddenly stricken with a severe fever, probably due to the accumulation of prolonged labors, died within a few days. The presidency of the Council was at once conferred upon Gregory. In making this choice, were the Fathers of the Council guided by regard for the personal qualities of the Bishop of Constantinople? Or did they intend applying to this instance the theory they would soon afterward proclaim in their third canon in which they declared the supremacy of the see of Constantinople over all the other sees of Christendom, after that of Rome? We cannot say. But, as a result of this discussion, the man who had trembled before the responsibilities of power, who had longed for silence and solitude, found himself, under most difficult circumstances, overwhelmed by the double burden of governing the greatest Church of the East and of presiding over a council in which partisan intrigues and strifes promised to be particularly bitter.

#### St. Flavian

The question of Meletius' successor presented a difficult problem. It was reported that Meletius and Paulinus had arranged together that the right to occupy the see of Antioch should go to whichever of them survived the other. What canonical value did this agreement possess? Was such an agreement really made? The generous and peace-loving Gregory, who had more reason than anybody else to complain of Paulinus, declared himself in his favor. He maintained the genuineness and validity of the pact attributed to the two rivals. He has preserved his eloquent plea in the form of charming Greek verses.<sup>87</sup> But unfortunately he alluded to the

<sup>87</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poem 11, De vita sua, P. G., XXXVII, 1134.

support which Paulinus received from the West. At these words, among the younger members of the Council there arose a murmuring which Gregory compares to the buzzing of a swarm of bees and the croaking of a flock of jays. 88 Asiatic pride rebelled. Someone cried out: "Was it not in the East that Christ was born?" "Yes," answered Gregory, "but it was also in the East that He was put to death." The Council almost unanimously rejected Gregory's proposal and designated, to take Meletius' place, one of his friends, the priest Flavian.

# St. Gregory Nazianzen

Gregory felt this defeat keenly. The cause of such a failure was easy to surmise. "Ever since the untoward venture of Maximus, although Gregory's virtues always commanded respect and his eloquence won admiration, his counsel ceased to inspire confidence. Little account was taken of his judgment since his perspicacity had been found at fault. . . . Gregory, with painful grief, observed how little weight his words carried, even with his best friends. Of what service would his continued presence be if important honors did not assure him any real credit? In his saintly and poetic soul, the least scruple became remorse. A sense of his own uselessness begot a sickly frame of mind so that he no longer appeared regularly at the sessions. He lived in a retired house where at length he confined himself. The Council, thus left without a guide, soon went on haphazardly, day by day deserving more the reproach of turbulence and disorder which Gregory, from his retirement, kept addressing to it." 89

The arrival of the Egyptian bishops added to the difficulty. Gregory decided the hour had come to make a final decision. "For some time past," he says, "I had been like a horse shut in

<sup>88</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>89</sup> De Broglie, op. cit., V, 433.

a stable. I kept pawing the ground and neighing in my bonds, longing for my pasture and solitude." In the midst of one of the conciliar sessions he unexpectedly appeared before his fellow-bishops. "Men of God," he said to them, "please take no account of what affects me. Stop your strifes and treat each other with brotherly regard. Like Jonas, I sacrifice myself for the safety of the ship, although I am not the cause of the storm." Not a voice was raised to beg him to reconsider his decision. Gregory, without another word, left the hall. A number of his friends, by way of protest against the coldness of the Council, left with him. Speaking of these events, Gregory Nazianzen himself remarks: "It is not my wish to scrutinize men's thoughts, for nothing but simplicity fills my heart. But I must say that they acquiesced in my decision with more readiness than might have been expected. Such is the gratitude which every country shows to those who have served it." 90

Theodosius was more generous. When the holy Bishop told the Emperor of his intention to resign from the presidency of the Council and from the see of Constantinople, that he might return to his beloved solitude, Theodosius embraced him and endeavored to persuade him to remain, but without avail. The active career of Gregory Nazianzen was ended.

Before departing, he assembled the people and the Council in his church for one last time. "In the customs of that age," says Villemain, "interest in such a sight was very great, and the preacher's genius never seemed more brilliant or lofty. With simplicity he gave an account of his life, of his trials, of his faith, of his efforts for the welfare of the people. At the close of his discourse he greeted all the places that were present in his memory, all that he loved, all that he was about to leave." <sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poem 11, De vita sua.

<sup>91</sup> Villemain, op. cit., pp. 136 f.

"Farewell," he said, "to you, Anastasis church, that acquired your name from our devout confidence; farewell, mighty and famous temple, our new conquest that owes its present greatness to the holy word; farewell, all you sacred abodes of the faith, that embrace the various parts of this city; farewell, all you ministers of the Lord at the Holy Table, you who approach God when He descends to you; farewell, sacred songs, harmony of psalms, gatherings of orphans and widows, the looks of the poor turned toward God and toward me; farewell. homes of hospitality, friends of Christ helpful to my infirmity. Farewell, East and West, for whom I have striven and by whom I am crushed. Farewell, guardian angels of this Church, who protected my presence and will protect my exile. And Thou, Holy Trinity, my thought and my glory. May they conserve Thee, and mayest Thou save them! O Trinity, save my people; may I learn each day that they are growing in wisdom and virtue! Children, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." 92

After this farewell Gregory Nazianzen went first to Caesarea, then to his native Arianzus, where he finished his life, far from courts and councils, in prayer and study and the writing of sacred poems which breathe all the religious tenderness of his beautiful soul.<sup>93</sup>

# Nectarius, Patriarch of Constantinople

Upon the proposal of the bishops and the approval of the people, Theodosius designated, as Gregory's successor, a former praetor of Constantinople, Nectarius by name. Like Ambrose, he was as yet a simple catechumen; but, although he did not become an unworthy prelate, he did not bring to the see of Constantinople the lofty virtues with which Ambrose adorned the see of Milan.

<sup>92</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 42; Mansi, III, 582 f.

<sup>93</sup> See Guignet, Saint Gregoire de Nazianze, orateur et épistolier.

Under the presidency of Nectarius, the Council continued its labors. No satisfactory results came of the efforts to bring the Macedonians into union. Says Socrates: "These men would have preferred Arianism to the *homoousios*." Socrates fails to say that the disagreement which separated the Macedonians from the Church concerned not merely the consubstantiality of the Son of God, but also and especially the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

The same historian also says that the Macedonians withdrew from the Council, taking pains, by letters, to forewarn their followers against acceptance of the Nicene symbol. The hundred and fifty bishops who remained then reaffirmed the faith of Nicaea.<sup>94</sup> Sozomen and Theodoret give scarcely any further details about the holding of the Council.

#### The Creed

From the Acts of this Council we have a symbol of faith and seven disciplinary canons. Is the symbol that we possess only part of a longer and more detailed exposition of the faith? Tillemont thought so, relying upon a declaration by a council that was held at Constantinople the following year and upon a discourse delivered at the Council of Chalcedon.<sup>95</sup>

Regarding the symbol three hypotheses have been advanced. The traditional opinion regards it as a revision of the Nicene Creed. Tillemont identifies it with the one which St. Epiphanius inserted in his *Ancoratus*. More recently Harnack and Duchesne have claimed that the so-called Symbol of Constantinople <sup>97</sup> has nothing in common with the council of 381.

<sup>94</sup> Socrates, V, 8; Sozomen, VIII, 7; Theodoret, V, 8.

<sup>98</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, IX, art. 78, p. 221. Cf. Ceillier, Histoire des auteurs sacrés, V, 646.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 888.

<sup>97</sup> Or the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople, which is now sung at mass.

That council, according to them, simply amplified the Jerusalem symbol with Nicene formulas, and it was not until a late date, after the Council of Chalcedon, that we have the theory —thereafter universally adopted—of a connection between the so-called symbol of Constantinople and the doctrinal decisions of the second ecumenical council.<sup>98</sup>

In defense of this hypothesis it is said that St. Gregory Nazianzen, some time after the close of the Council, writing about the rule of faith, speaks only of the Symbol of Nicaea, without mentioning that of Constantinople. But, says Hefele, "it is somewhat remarkable, and probably only to be accounted for by the peculiar relation of Gregory of Nazianzus to this Synod, that this Father of the Church . . . only mentioned the Nicene Creed, and not that of Constantinople." 100

It is also noteworthy that the third general council, held at Ephesus, makes no mention of the Symbol of Constantinople and refers solely to that of Nicaea. It is true the Nicene Symbol is the only one expressly named; but we can comprehend the omission of any reference to the Symbol of Constantinople. As it emanated from a council of Eastern bishops, it did not yet possess the authority of the symbol of 325, approved by a representation of the entire Church. Moreover, when the Fathers of Ephesus forbade the recitation in the churches "of a symbol different from the one that was in use," they may have been alluding to the Symbol of Constantinople.

The following is a translation of this symbol, as it is printed, along with the Acts of the second ecumenical Council of Constantinople, in all collections of the councils:

<sup>98</sup> Harnack, art. "Constantinopel (Symbol)" in the Realencyklopädie, 3d ed., XI, 12-28; Duchesne, op. cit., II, 350 note. On this question, see Hefele, II, 348 f., and J. Bois, art. "Constantinople (concile de 381)" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, III, 1229 f.

<sup>99</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 102.

<sup>100</sup> Hefele, II, 350.

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all time (ages), Light from Light, very God from very God, begotten, not created, of the same substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man; who was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried, and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. We look for a resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen." 101

The ancient Greek manuscripts give seven canons of the council of 381, but the old Latin translations contain only the first four, and these alone are regarded by critics as authentic. The first one anathematizes the Eunomians or Anomoeans, the Arians or Eudoxians, the semi-Arians or Pneumatomachi, the Sabellians, the Marcellians, the Photinians, and the Apollinarians. The second canon forbids bishops to interfere in affairs of another diocese. The third attributes to the bishop of Constantinople the preëminence of honor over the other bishops, after the bishop of Rome, because, it says, "Constantinople is the new Rome." The fourth canon

<sup>101</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>102</sup> Hefele, II, 352.

<sup>103</sup> On the meaning of the word "diocese" at that time, see Hefele-Leclercq, Histoire des conciles, II, 22 f., note 2.

regulates the affair of Maximus the Cynic in the manner we have already indicated.

At its conclusion the Council addressed a letter to Theodosius, asking him to confirm its decisions. The Emperor replied by a decree ordering that the Churches, in the East, be turned over to the bishops in doctrinal agreement regarding the equal divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the orthodox prelates whose names he enumerates for each province.<sup>104</sup>

This synod, which later became officially recognized as the second ecumenical council, was a long time in being accepted by the universal Church. The bitterness of the discussions that arose between the East and West and the persistence of the misunderstandings that existed between those two parts of the Christian world were the causes of this long delay. The West was slow to accept the Acts of the Council of Constantinople without reserve. Photius declares that this council was approved by Pope Damasus shortly after it was held; 105 but he does not say under what conditions and within what limits. There is reason to suppose this approbation referred only to the profession of faith. 106

At the Council of Chalcedon (451), all the Fathers, including the legates of the Holy See, acclaimed the Symbol of Constantinople; but, when there was question of the third canon (regarding the preëminence of the capital of the East), the papal legates protested and even left the session. Popes Vigilius, Pelagius II, and Gregory the Great recognized the sovereign authority of the Council of 381, but solely on the doctrinal question. Not until the thirteenth century (at the

<sup>104</sup> Theodosian Code, I, III, De fide catholica; Sozomen, VIII, 8.

<sup>105</sup> Photius, De synodis, Mansi, III, 596.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Hefele, II, 371 ff.

<sup>107</sup> Mansi, VII, 441.

<sup>108</sup> St. Gregory the Great, Letters, bk. 7, letter 34.

Council of the Lateran, 1215) did the Church accept without restriction the disciplinary canons of the second ecumenical council.<sup>109</sup>

109 The Council of Constantinople of 382 called the council of 381 ecumenical (οἰκουμενή); but this word should not here be taken in its strict sense. For the Easterners at that time it had the same meaning as the word "universalis" had for the Africans. (Theodoret, V, 9.)

#### CHAPTER II

# From the Second Ecumenical Council to the Death of Valentinian II (381-392)

THE Council of Nicaea by condemning Arianism and proclaiming the consubstantiality of the Son of God with the Father, and the Council of Constantinople by reproving Macedonianism and affirming the divinity of the Holy Ghost, defined for all future ages the Catholic belief in the Holy Trinity. The Symbol of Nicaea-Constantinople, publicly chanted in our churches, remains even today the most perfect expression of Catholic belief in this essential dogma. But the shadow cast by Apollinaris the Younger on the divine person of Christ continued. The disturbance engendered in consciences by Priscillian was far from being allayed. After the Trinitarian question had been definitely settled, the Christological question and the moral question sprang up: they were no less violent and disturbing. The Church did not lack intrepid champions for her defense. In the first rank of these was Jerome. Interrupting the peace of his solitude and austere labors, he fought both the Apollinarian heresy and the various forms of sensualism with the full passion of his ardent soul, while Ambrose and Chrysostom defended the integrity of Catholic dogma and morals against those in high places, against the Empress, and against even the Emperor.

# Council of Aquileia (381)

The fact that the Council of Constantinople was composed exclusively of Eastern bishops lessened its authority in the eyes of the Western heretics. Arianism, which would soon spread in the western part of the Empire through the invasions of the barbarians, was never indeed as strong there as in the East. Yet Palladius and Secundian, two bishops of Illyria, whose sees we do not know, spread questionable doctrines, which were the more dangerous since they were hidden under orthodox formulas. In 379 Gratian, then sole emperor, in order to end the troubles caused by these prelates, decided to assemble a general council in the city of Aquileia. His adviser Ambrose dissuaded him from the project, showed him that the question was a purely local one, and persuaded him that it would suffice to convoke the bishops of the neighboring dioceses. The Emperor followed this advice. During the summer of 381 thirty-two bishops, coming from different districts of the West (Italy, Pannonia, Gaul, and Africa), went to Aquileia. Rome, where Pope Damasus was then held in restraint by his rival Ursinus, was not represented at the Council, which began its sessions September 3, 381. Valerian of Aquileia presided, and Ambrose was its leading spirit.

The first important thing to be done was to remove ambiguities. On motion of Ambrose, there was read the letter of Arius to Alexander bishop of Alexandria. When Palladius was asked whether or not he joined in these blasphemies against the Son of God, he gave an evasive answer, made recriminations against Ambrose, and called for a general council. Bishop Secundian and the priest Attalus, his disciple, resorted to the same subterfuges. On the proposal of the Bishop of Milan, that same day, at one o'clock in the afternoon, the Council anathematized Palladius, Secundian, and Attalus, declared them heretical, and appealed to Emperors Gratian, Valentinian II, and Theodosius, with a view to the immediate execution of its decisions. In particular they asked Gratian, who held Rome in his states, to place no credence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hefele, II, 375.

in the claims of the antipope Ursinus and his calumnies against Damasus.<sup>2</sup>

## Apollinarianism

Thanks to Ambrose's energy and activity, Arianism, driven to its last intrenchments, was vanquished in the West as in the East. The same cannot be said of a more subtle heresy, which the Bishop of Milan intentionally handled with more circumspection. It was Apollinarianism. The great services rendered by Apollinaris the Younger and by his venerable father during the Trinitarian dispute, and their courage during the persecution under Julian the Apostate, called for consideration which Arian perfidy had not deserved. Further, the Apollinarian error, in its doctrinal statement, did not give rise to a scandal like that which Arianism provoked. Many of its followers were unquestionably in good faith.

It was said that Apollinaris' great concern was to establish that Christ is a God made man, and not a man made God. Contrary to the Arians, who would not consider Jesus as anything more than a man whose mind and will were penetrated by the Divinity, Apollinaris—so it was said—desired to show, in Christ, God taking a human body and animating it with His love, His will, and His intelligence in such a way as to make of Him only one Person, one being, one nature. The followers of Apollinaris, when saying this, did not notice, or pretended not to notice, that by thus explaining Christ's divinity they were really denying the integrity of His humanity.<sup>3</sup> In the Council of Alexandria, as early as 362, it had been declared against them that "the Savior did not have a soul-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mansi, III, 615 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Cf. G. Voisin, La Doctrine trinitaire d'Apollinaire de Laodicée, in the Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, II (1901), 33 ff.

less body, one without intelligence . . . , that He came to save not only our body, but our intellect, our soul."

In 374 in his Ancoratus, and again in 377 in his Panarion, St. Epiphanius denounced the new error, pointing out, in opposition to it, the symbol which catechumens of doubtful orthodoxy were obliged to recite, namely: "The Word became man, that is, took a perfect human nature: the soul, body, mind, whatever constitutes man, sin excepted." It was not yet remarked, but subsequently it could be seen that, by his insistence upon the oneness of the being and the nature in Christ, Apollinaris was preparing the way for the Monophysite heresy. In 382 what more especially drew attention to Apollinarianism was the plan which Apollinaris had been publishing for several years, of forming his followers into a separate community, of conferring the episcopal dignity upon his preferred disciples, and of disturbing the Church by his disputes.

## Council of Rome (382)

Pope Damasus convened another council at Rome and invited to it the episcopate of the East as well as that of the West. The Greek bishops did not come, alleging, as excuse, that their duties obliged them to remain in their dioceses, and that they had just received from the Emperor an invitation to assemble in Constantinople. They did, in fact, meet there, confirmed the Acts of the council of 381, and probably added to those Acts two canons which later were reckoned as the fifth and sixth canons of the second ecumenical council. Three of these bishops, however, went to Rome and were present at the Roman Council of 382. The Acts of this council have not come down to us. All we know is that it condemned the heresy of the Apollinarians and that Jerome, at Damasus' request, played a decisive part in it.

# St. Jerome

After Gregory Nazianzen's withdrawal, there was no strong bond to keep Jerome in Constantinople. The news that the Pope was going to assemble a council at Rome made Jerome decide to go to the Eternal City. He reached there, matured by age and study, by the penitential austerities of the desert, and by the experience of men and things which he derived from the great controversies of the East. Damasus probably had expressed his wish that Jerome return to Rome and was glad to make use of his vast erudition. The Pope presently made him his secretary. Jerome writes in a letter: "I was helping Damasus bishop of Rome with his ecclesiastical correspondence, and writing his answers to the questions referred to him by the councils of the East and West." <sup>4</sup>

The Pope wished to open a path of reconciliation for the Apollinarians, for those at least who, without much reflection, were seduced by the example of others and accepted Apollinaris' doctrine even though alarmed at its dangers. Damasus therefore commissioned Jerome to draw up a profession of faith to be signed by followers of the heresy upon their returning to the Church. The success of the move was thwarted by a trick of the irreconcilable Apollinarians. Rufinus informs us that, as Jerome, in his profession of faith, used the expression "Homo dominicus" to designate Christ, the heretics protested against this formula. The learned scholar then exhibited a writing of St. Athanasius which contained it. But his opponents, gaining possession of the manuscript, erased the contested words from it and rewrote them in such a manner as to make it appear that Jerome was guilty of fraud. This detestable procedure provoked a stinging diatribe in which Jerome did not hesitate to call the forgers the names

<sup>4</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 123, no. 10, To Ageruchia (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 233).

they deserved. But the deception poisoned people's minds, and the heretics' purpose was accomplished. The Council could do nothing but mercilessly condemn Apollinarianism.<sup>5</sup> Many of the Apollinarians remained unreconciled.

# Council of Constantinople (383)

Two years later an attempt by Theodosius to obtain the return of the followers of Arius, Macedonius, and Eunomius into the Church met with no better success. The Emperor decided upon a council to be held at Constantinople, to bring about an agreement regarding the doctrinal teaching of the Church.<sup>6</sup> It was to be a great council in which the bishops of all parties would participate. It met in the month of June, 383. Demophilus, former bishop of Constantinople, represented the Arians; Eleusius of Cyzicus, the Pneumatomachi; Eunomius, the Anomoeans; Nectarius, the orthodox. Theodosius received them all kindly and asked each of them to submit his profession of faith to him. Instead of moderating their formulas, the representatives of the different sects declared their doctrine with insolence. Eunomius, after denying any participation by the Son and by the Holy Ghost in the divinity of the Father, threatened his opponents with the wrath of God.<sup>7</sup> Theodosius, enraged at these blasphemies, tore up the professions of faith of the heretics, who returned wrathful to their dioceses. Thereupon the Emperor commanded them to quit their Churches. But the imperial order was not executed. As Sozomen says, Theodosius intended merely to frighten the heretics.8

The Council also tried to end the Schism of Antioch. But

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Rufinus, Apology against Jerome (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., III, 435 ff.). Cf. Hefele, II, 381.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Socrates, V, 10; Sozomen, VII, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Eunomius' profession of faith will be found in Mansi, III, 645-649.

<sup>8</sup> Sozomen, loc. cit.

it was impossible to bring about an agreement between Paulinus' followers, who came from Egypt, Arabia, and Cyprus, and Flavian's followers, who belonged to Palestine, Phenicia, and Syria.

# St. Jerome and Pope St. Damasus

Neither the saintly Pope nor the mighty Emperor was disheartened by these failures. Henceforth Damasus had Jerome at his side, a man of watchful zeal and tireless devotion. Theodosius would meet Ambrose, the statesman-bishop who would help him defend the purity of Christian doctrine against his enemies, and, at need, against his own passions.

The Sovereign Pontiff requested Jerome to render a twofold service. The austere ascetic and vigorous polemist was asked to write a refutation of certain sects whose sensual tendencies were spreading in Rome, favored by the persistence of the pagan spirit in the capital of the world. Because of the endless discussions about the Bible, which was often altered by fraud or by ignorance, the industrious scholar was asked to make a reliable version of the Bible, the authenticity of which might be made official by the sovereign authority.

The principal sects about which Damasus was concerned were those that made appeal to the names of Lucifer of Cagliari, Helvidius, and Jovinianus.

#### The Luciferians

We know the views held by the Luciferians, not only through St. Jerome's refutation of them, but also from the petition addressed in their name to Emperors Valentinian and Theodosius in 383.9 Lucifer of Cagliari had protested against the mildness of the regulations made by the Fathers of the

<sup>9</sup> This Libellus precum ad imperatores is to be found in P. L., XIII, 81 ff.

Council of Alexandria about repentant Arians. The Luciferians, under the influence of the deacon Hilary and several others of their leaders, added most extravagant doctrines to Lucifer's ideas. According to them, the whole world was given up to the devil; the bishops who came back from Arianism were of no more worth than the priests of the idols, and they were led back to the Catholic Church by nothing else but the attraction of ecclesiastical wealth. They told strange fables about the divine punishment that would afflict apostates and the protectors of apostates. When a sect professes such harsh opinions in theory, it happens not rarely that, in practice, its members indulge in scandalous disorders.

In the Dialogue against the Luciferians, 10 which Jerome published in 382, 11 he does not mention any moral disorder in the Luciferian community of Rome, but he foresees the danger and indignantly refutes the exaggerated theories of those who claimed to be disciples of Lucifer. He takes up the defense of the Council of Alexandria, which, he says, "by its prudent regulations preserved a large number of people from the poison of Arianism and, by its salutary indulgence, rescued the world from the teeth of the infernal serpent."

#### Helvidius

Helvidius was a disciple of Auxentius, the usurping bishop of Milan. He seems to have been one of those turbulent spirits who are eager for notoriety and not very scrupulous about the means they use, provided they make a name in the world. In a book reeking with blasphemies and solecisms, Helvidius, basing his contention on Gospel texts, denied the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary. Then, taking occasion of this thesis, he maintained that the state of virginity has no advantage over the state of marriage.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> P. L., XXIII, 155-182.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Van den Gheyn, art. "Jerome" in the Dictionnaire de la Bible, III, 1305.

For a while Jerome resisted the requests that he take up his pen against the reviler. He did not want to give excessive publicity to the poor arguments of an unworthy calumniator. But when he saw weak Christians shaken by the incredible boldness of Helvidius and his gross fallacies, Jerome decided. His reply, which has come down to us under the title *Liber de perpetua virginitate Beatae Mariae*, is overflowing with erudition and at the same time sparkling with animation. The sophist's arguments are taken up one by one, and dissected and refuted with a precision that leaves none of his statements intact. The author concludes his book as follows:

"Because I think that, finding the truth too strong for you, you will turn to disparaging my life and abusing my character (it is the way of weak women to talk tittle-tattle in corners when they have been put down by their masters), I shall anticipate you. I assure you that I shall regard your railing as a high distinction, since the same lips that assail me have disparaged Mary, and I, a servant of the Lord, am favored with the same barking eloquence as His mother." 18

#### **Tovinianus**

A vagabond monk, named Jovinianus, was not satisfied with peddling Helvidius' errors; he said there was no merit in abstinence or in the monastic life; he maintained the equality of glory of all the saints and the identity of punishment of all the damned; he proclaimed that justification, once acquired, could not be lost. In short, his teaching was a forerunner of the worst errors which Luther and Calvin spread twelve centuries later. Ten years after, under Pope Siricius, when Jovinianus' followers had formed a sect and when the heretic gave his doctrines to the public, Jerome, with the same learning and vigor, refuted what he called "the Epicure of the New Law."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> P. L., XXIII, 183-206.

<sup>18</sup> Chap. 22 (alias 24), P. L., XXIII, 206 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 487).

#### The Latin Bible

The changes which these heretics and others made in the Biblical texts to uphold their doctrines, and the differences that had crept into the various manuscripts of the current Latin translation (the ancient Itala) rendered a thorough revision of the received text urgent. Jerome seemed to be the writer providentially prepared for that important work. Damasus asked him to do it. The learned exegete was not blind to the difficulties of such a labor. He foresaw the criticisms that it would arouse.

"The labor is one of love," he wrote, "but at the same time both perilous and presumptuous; for in guiding others I must be content to be judged by all. . . . How can I dare to change the language of the world in its hoary old age? Is there a man, learned or unlearned, who will not, when he takes the volume into his hands and perceives that what he reads does not suit his settled tastes, break out immediately into violent language, and call me a forger and a profane person for having the audacity to add anything to the ancient books, or to make any changes or corrections therein? Now there are two consoling reflections which enable me to bear the odium—in the first place, command is given by you who are the supreme bishop; and secondly, even on the showing of those who revile us, readings at variance with the early copies cannot be right." 14

First Jerome translated the Gospels. Scholars are agreed upon the eminent merits of this version. They consider it "a work full of tact, marking a great step in the history of the textual criticism of the Bible and supplying the Latin world with a text of the Gospels based on solid criticism." <sup>15</sup> So as not to disturb the habits of the faithful more than would be necessary, the translator departed as little as possible from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> St. Jerome, Preface to the Vulgate Version of the Four Gospels, P. L., XXIX, 525 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 487).

<sup>15</sup> Van den Gheyn, in the Dictionnaire de la Bible, III, 1307.

the text of the ancient Itala, changed it according to the Greek text only when the meaning seemed to him poorly rendered, and even in that case did not always translate directly from the Greek but chose, among the various Latin texts at his disposal, the readings that were closest to the Greek.<sup>16</sup>

After the four Gospels, Jerome translated the Psalms. The first translation, made from the Greek of the Septuagint, was the one that formed the *Roman Psalter*, which was in use in Rome until the time of Pius V. From a second translation, more carefully done and based on Origen's *Hexapla*, came the *Gallican Psalter*, so called because it was first adopted in Gaul.<sup>17</sup> In 392 Jerome made a third translation based on the Hebrew text.

As he had foreseen, his work became an object of hostile criticism. But his Scriptural labors brought him treasured friendships. Pope Damasus wrote to him as follows: "I know nothing finer than our conversations about the Scripture. There is nothing that nourishes my soul with more tasty food." 18 Other souls wanted to share in that pious banquet. In a palace on the Aventine certain patrician ladies, "enamored of the Gospel ideal, by their virtues courageously protested against the paganism which still flaunted itself and the frivolous customs of a large number of Christians. There was the mistress of that same noble home, Marcella, who, after being married a short time, vowed her widowhood to God, to the poor, and to the study of the Scriptures. There was Albina, Marcella's mother; and Asella, whose gentle-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Jülicher, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, p. 389; Grützmacher, Hieronymus, p. 217.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The Gallican Psalter is the one which the Church uses in the Breviary; but the passages of the Psalms employed in the Missal, as also the *Venite exultemus* of the Invitatory, are taken from the Roman Psalter.

<sup>18</sup> Damasus to Jerome. See A. Condamin, Les Caractères de la traduction de la Bible par saint Jérôme, in the Recherches de science religieuse, 1911, pp. 425-440.

ness was praised by Palladius the biographer of St. John Chrysostom; and Furia, the heir of the Camilli; and Fabiola, who, less solidly established in goodness than were her pious companions, would one day repair the errors of her youth by penance and charity. We should note three women who were particularly dear to Jerome. Their names accompany his in history: Paula and two of her daughters, Blesilla and Eustochium." <sup>19</sup>

# St. Jerome on the Aventine

The presence in Rome of the saintly and learned priest, whose virtues seemed to accord so well with the aspirations of this group of choice souls, gave Marcella the idea of making his acquaintance. Much insistence and perhaps Pope Damasus' intervention were needed to overcome Jerome's somewhat gruff aloofness. He went to the Aventine. He read the Sacred Books and commented on them to this group of wonderful women, in whom the noble dignity of the Roman patrician class was combined with the gentle humility of the Gospel. Soon the most distinguished members of the Roman clergy, such as the priests Domnio and Oceanus, and even laymen, such as the senator Pammachius and the magistrate Marcellinus, obtained the privilege of taking part in these pious and scholarly gatherings. "How much virtue and ability," Jerome wrote later, "how much holiness and purity I found in her (Marcella), I am afraid to say." 20 The better to follow the lessons of the learned teacher, his hearers resolutely began the study of Greek and Hebrew. Marcella excelled in these intellectual labors. "Whenever I think of her eagerness for study," says Jerome, "I confess my laziness,

<sup>19</sup> Largent, Saint Jérôme, pp. 28 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 127, no. 7, To Principia, P. L., XXII, 1091 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 255).

I who, with the Savior's crib ever before me, cannot do what this noble lady does, in the time she steals from the care of her home and the management of her many servants."

#### Pagan Morals

But when Jerome, coming down the slope of the Aventine, again witnessed the spectacle of pagan morals in the Rome consecrated to Christ, he was filled with spirited indignation, he breathed maledictions and vehement satires. He upbraided the avarice and intemperance and hypocrisy that, after the heroic virtues by which martyrs had amazed the world, slipped in among the baptized of Christ, among priests and monks. "It shames me to say it," he declares,

"but some men seek the diaconate and priesthood simply that they may be able to see women with less restraint. Their curling hair shows traces of the tongs; their fingers glisten with rings. When you see men acting in this way, think of them rather as bridegrooms than as clergymen." <sup>21</sup>

#### Death of St. Damasus

Jerome always found it hard to hold back sharp and stinging invective, whether from his lips or from his pen. But often he atoned for his unrestrained words by the cruel retaliation he had to suffer. Those who recognized themselves in his satires never forgave him for them. Sometimes he was calumniated among his friends. The death of Pope Damasus (December 10, 384) deprived him of his most solid support and occasioned a fresh outburst of attacks by his foes. Jerome decided to go back to his hermit's cell in Palestine. He set out for the East after addressing this tender farewell to one of the Roman laity who had attended his lessons. "Noble Asella,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Letter 22, no. 28, To Eustochium, P. L., XXII, 414.

I am writing these few words to you in haste before I embark. I am sad and my eyes fill with tears. I thank God that I have been found worthy to be hated by men. My enemies have cast disgrace upon me by falsely charging me with a certain offense. But by good report or ill report, we reach the kingdom of God. Salute Paula, Eustochium, Albina, Marcella, Felicitas. Tell them that some day all of us will be at God's judgment-seat, where each one will show the conscience he had during life."

# Empress Justina

While Pope Damasus, seconded by Jerome, was working for the restoration of faith and morals in the Church, events of serious moment had disturbed the Empire.

Between the court of Milan, where Emperor Gratian established his residence, and the court of Constantinople, where Emperor Theodosius resided, Empress Justina, Valentinian's widow, established herself at Sirmium, impatiently waiting for the hour when her son Valentinian II, officially associated with Gratian's government, would be capable of exercising his power. Sirmium soon became a center of malcontents, where a third court was formed, secretly hostile to the court of Milan. The Arians were to be found there in large numbers. Justina found herself presently at the head of the Arian party. Policy seems to have been the decisive motive in this new attitude. For the same reason Ambrose, the inspirer of the Catholic policy of Gratian, became hateful to Justina. Between her and the Bishop of Milan many a conflict arose.

But in 383 an unforeseen event changed the face of things. Gratian, having hastened into Gaul at report of the sedition that raised Maximus to power, was assassinated at Lyons in an ambush. Justina, knowing that Ambrose was, even from the political point of view, the great power that had to be

reckoned with, went in haste to Milan, entered the Bishop's house leading her son by the hand, and placed the child in Ambrose's arms. Then she asked a favor of the Bishop. The usurper Maximus might agree to divide his power with the young prince. Maximus would be left Gaul and Great Britain, and the last survivor of the Valentinians would rule over Italy, Spain, and the Danubian provinces, where the memory of his father still lived. Let Ambrose deign to go to Maximus' court. His authority would doubtless succeed, while saving a distressed mother and her young son, in assuring the peace of the Empire by this agreement.

For Ambrose it was a question of rescuing the distressed and of forgetting an enmity. He accepted. "Thus it came about that the minister of a Master whose kingdom is not of this world was called upon, for the first time in the annals of the Church, to intervene in the partition of political sovereignties. It is not without interest for us to note that, if on that day the Church took a first step on a path on which previously nothing had led her to enter, it was in response to the appeal of a widow and an orphan. Is not this indeed a living and symbolic figure of the part she took later when it was the whole society, perishing at her feet, that urged her to come to its aid against the invasion of barbarism, and when thus she remained the sole guardian of right in the deluge of might?" <sup>22</sup>

By long, patient negotiations Ambrose obtained from Maximus all that could reasonably be hoped for: a provisional agreement on the proposed basis. But, during Ambrose's absence, the enemies of the Church had again become active.

### The Altar of Victory

From time immemorial, in the meeting-hall of the Senate at Rome, there stood an altar of Victory, the protecting god-

<sup>22</sup> De Broglie, Saint Ambroise, pp. 67 f.

dess of the city and of the Empire. This altar had been removed by Constantine, put back by Julian, tolerated by Valentinian I, and again removed by Gratian. It had experienced all the vicissitudes of the emperors' religious policy. The pagan members of the Roman Senate thought that, in the absence of the Bishop of Milan, a fourteen-year-old prince could easily be persuaded to ratify a decision of the high assembly restoring the altar of Victory to its place.

The campaign was handled cleverly. The orator selected as spokesman for the pagan claims was one of the most notable men of the time, the senator Symmachus. In the course of a long life, he had filled the highest offices in the State. He had cultivated all the arts of the mind and, in performing the duties of public office, had always shown great fairness toward the Christians. In his writings he never used a single word of hatred for Christianity. But, with the full force of his patriotism, he clung to the maintenance of the traditional religion of old Rome. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he did not adopt new ceremonies from the Eastern religions.

His petition to the Emperor possessed that dignified and majestic eloquence which led people to compare him with Cicero and to regard him as the leading orator of his time. For the restoration of the altar of Victory, he did not appeal to the ancient mythologies or the traditions of the idolatrous priesthood or the teachings of the philosophers of Greece and Rome. In the discussion that ensued, for him the religious question was resolved into the patriotic question. He said: "We ask for a return of the system of religion that has so long been profitable to the commonwealth. Not to favor our request is to be a friend of the barbarians. Should we forget the homage due to the goddess, we ought, at any rate, respect the majesty of the Roman Senate. We are defending the traditions received in our childhood. In our old age we wish to hand them on to our posterity."

Symmachus' petition was referred to the imperial consistory, the members of which were easily persuaded. But Ambrose arrived in time. He grasped the seriousness of the decision which the Emperor was about to make. Overcome in the realm of its doctrines and worship, paganism was now going to reëstablish itself as a national bond and in this way start again to pervert men's souls. Constantine's work came close to being undone. Ambrose asked to see a copy of the petition. His request was granted. Soon the Emperor, the consistory, and the Senate had before their eyes, along with Symmachus' able plea, the ardent supplication of the Bishop of Milan.

The pagan senator evoked the glories of old Rome. These the Christian bishop did not deny. He declared that the bloody sacrifices of idolatry were not the cause of those glories. Rather the cause was to be found in the valor of the Roman warriors and in the stern virtues of ancient times. Tradition had been appealed to; but tradition is a forward movement, not a return to the past. The authority of ancient times should be regarded as merely a beginning. Symmachus, in an elegant rhetorical figure, called upon the Eternal City to speak; but the Eternal City really utters something different from what was asserted. Let us hear what it says: "I detest the religion of Nero. I am sorry for my past errors. In olden times I had this in common with the barbarians, that I did not know the true God. In my old age I am not ashamed to change with the whole world. No longer do I think to find God's will manifested in the entrails of victims. I want to learn the mysteries of heaven by the testimony of God who made it. Whom shall I believe about God, rather than God Himself?"

Ambrose's reply convinced the members of the consistory. The young Emperor, implored not to undo the work of his brother, condemned the pagans and their altar.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>28</sup> On this important dispute, see Beugnot, Histoire de la destruction du paganisme,

#### The Arians in Milan

But another struggle called Ambrose's attention to Milan. There it was that Empress Justina had just established her court, and there the Arians abounded. At their head they placed a bishop of their own choosing, a Goth by birth, like many of them. They gave him the name of Auxentius in memory of the former Arian bishop, Ambrose's predecessor. Valentinian, when urged by his mother, had not the courage to refuse them one of the city churches, the Portian Basilica. But, before carrying out the decision, the lawful bishop must be informed. Ambrose was summoned to the imperial palace. To the Emperor, who called upon him to give up the basilica, he replied: "I have no right to give it up to you, and you have no right to take it from me." While the discussion was becoming animated between the Bishop and the Emperor, the populace, sensing some danger for their bishop, surrounded the palace. Threatening outcries were heard. Justina became alarmed and quieted the tumult only by authorizing Ambrose to announce to the crowd that no basilica would be taken away from the Catholics.

Public order was restored. But Justina was angered. She held the Bishop to blame for the uprising which he quieted,<sup>24</sup> and she prepared to take her revenge. A month later she demanded for the Arians, not merely the Portian Basilica, which was located outside the city, but the High Basilica, which was of much greater importance. She met with the same resistance from Ambrose and encountered a more formidable uprising of the populace. In vain she proposed a compromise to him just when he was about to celebrate the holy sacrifice. The people who filled the church and surmised the meaning of the

bk. 8, chap. 6; Puech, Prudence, chap. 3; Thamin, Saint Ambroise et la morale chrétienne au IVe siècle, pp. 18–21; Boissier, La Fin du paganisme, bk. 6, chap. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> St. Ambrose, Sermon against Auxentius.

message, cried out with one voice: "No, Ambrose; do not yield anything." The exasperated crowd could not restrain its indignation. To quiet them, the Bishop started the prayers of mass. Later on he wrote as follows in a letter:

"I began to celebrate mass. Whilst offering the oblation, I heard that a certain Castulus, who, the Arians said, was a priest, had been seized by the people. I began to weep bitterly, and to implore God in the oblation that He would come to our aid, and that no one's blood be shed in the Church's cause, or at least that it might be my blood shed for the benefit not of my people only, but also for the unbelievers themselves." <sup>25</sup>

Justina then proceeded to use direct action on the people. Soldiers were mobilized. For three days there was the rumbling of sedition in Milan. With a view to pacification, Ambrose did not appear in the large basilicas, but officiated in an abandoned chapel. The faithful, however, gathered there in large numbers. On the evening of the third day a sound of arms was heard near the chapel. Were the imperial military forces about to attack the chapel? A band of soldiers did, in fact, appear; but they came to join in the common prayer. Moral force overcame the imperial power. Justina had called Ambrose a tyrant. "The power of a bishop," he said, "is his weakness. 'When I am weak,' says the Apostle, 'then I become strong.'" <sup>26</sup>

The conflict began over again a year later (389), in connection with a law granting freedom of worship to the Arians and providing a death penalty for anyone who interfered with the exercise of that freedom.<sup>27</sup> The law was aimed at Ambrose. But he did not change his attitude. "By refusing to surrender the inheritance of Jesus Christ," he said, "I am doing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 20, no. 5, To Marcellina.

<sup>26</sup> Idem, no. 23. "Tyrannis sacerdotis infirmitas est."

<sup>27</sup> Theodosian Code, I, IV, 14.

my duty as a priest. Let the Emperor do his duty as emperor." <sup>28</sup> Though asked to leave the city, he stayed at his post. For his better protection, his faithful locked themselves in the New Basilica with him and barricaded themselves there as if for a veritable siege. Valentinian II dared not force open the doors of the sacred edifice. At the end of a few days, to terminate the affair, he proposed that Ambrose come before him and there confer with the Arian bishop Auxentius. Ambrose refused. Instead, he had the church doors opened and solemnly consecrated the basilica, delivering a magnificent sermon in which he said: "The emperor is in the Church, not above it." <sup>29</sup> The imperial authority no longer protested.

## Ambrosian Hymns

During this Arian persecution, to occupy the people enclosed in the basilica with him, Ambrose introduced the singing of hymns and psalms by two choirs. He also composed hymns that were of such a special form that all hymns conceived on this new type have been called Ambrosian. One of the Bishop's purposes was to popularize the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and thus combat the Arians, who long since had put their teaching into songs and canticles. But St. Ambrose's work possessed a superior literary value. A competent judge regards them as the origin of all Christian lyricism, of all modern lyricism, "the ripest fruit of the assimilation of ancient culture by Christianity." As to the alternate manner of singing, that seems to have been taken from the East. Ambrose was well acquainted with the practices in use there. This was one of the characteristics of the Ambrosian liturgy,

<sup>28</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 31, no. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> "Imperator intra Ecclesiam et non supra Ecclesiam est." St. Ambrose, Sermo contra Auxentium, no. 30.

<sup>30</sup> St. Augustine, Confessions, bk. 9, chap. 7.

<sup>81</sup> Ebert, Histoire générale de la littérature du moyen âge en Occident, p. 187.

which was also distinguished from the Roman and Gallican liturgies by the places used in public worship, the sacred utensils, the ecclesiastical vestments, the arrangement of the liturgical year, the administration of the sacraments, and especially by the canon of the mass.<sup>32</sup>

# Pope St. Siricius

At this time the see of Rome was occupied by Pope Siricius. The Liber pontificalis says he was a Roman, the son of Tiburtius. His epitaph tells us that he had been a lector, then a deacon under Liberius, that he remained a deacon during the pontificate of Damasus, and that the faithful of Rome, until then divided by the schism, united in acclaiming him.<sup>33</sup> He was elected at the close of the year 384.<sup>34</sup> This election definitely eliminated the antipope Ursinus, who was left without any following. In a rescript dated February 23, 385, Emperor Valentinian II expressed his joy at the election of Siricius.<sup>35</sup> A few days before (February 11), the new Pope exercised his authority in an important matter. Himerius, bishop of Tarragona, had sent Pope Damasus a letter concerning various disorders afflicting the Church of Spain. Damasus was already dead, and Siricius had taken possession of the Apos-

<sup>32</sup> On all these points, see Lejay, in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne, art. "Ambrosien (rit)," I, 1373-1442. On the Ambrosian chant, see ibid., col. 1353-1373. The origins of the Ambrosian rite are obscure. Probst connects it with the Roman rite; Duchesne and Cagin, with the Gallican rite. The latter opinion seems to be better founded. But Duchesne has not succeeded in winning acceptance for his interpretation, which traces the origin of the rite back to the Arian Bishop Auxentius, predecessor of St. Ambrose. In this case, St. Ambrose merely revised the formulas, making them orthodox throughout. (Christian Worship, p. 93, and Sur l'origine de la liturgie gallicane, in the Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse, V (1900), 31 ff.) Cagin adopts the hypothesis of a very early Roman rite preserved at Milan and in the Gallican countries, while at Rome itself, not only did it change, but it was replaced by a really different rite. (Paléographie musicale, vol. V, preface.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> De Rossi, Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae, II, 102, 138.

<sup>84</sup> Tillemont, *Mémoires* (1730 ed.), vol. X, part 2, p. 86.

<sup>35</sup> Tillemont, loc. cit.

tolic See when the letter reached Rome. Siricius answered with a series of decisions, some of which ought to find a place in a history of the Church.

The first article, resting on the authority of Pope Liberius, the Council of Nicaea, and the practice at Rome, maintained the validity of Arian baptism, which was contested by certain Spanish bishops. The seventh not merely reminded priests and deacons of the duty of continence, but deposed from all their ecclesiastical dignities any members of the clergy who should defend the lawfulness of the marriage of the clergy. Siricius begged Himerius to make this reply known to all the bishops of Carthagenia, Boetica, Lusitania, Galicia, and to all his neighboring bishops. Says Tillemont: "This seems to include the bishops of Gaul." He threatened the bishops of those provinces with all the penalties judged useful by the Apostolic See, if they should fail to comply with these decisions.<sup>36</sup> "This letter is the first of all the papal decretals which scholars now recognize as genuine," says Tillemont. "It is also the first to be found in the ancient collections of the Latin Church." 37

# Council of Rome (386)

The following year (386) <sup>38</sup> Siricius, whose administrative and legislative activity was untiring, convened in council at Rome more than eighty bishops, to enforce several laws that were not being well observed. Canons were adopted to the following effect:

<sup>&</sup>quot;I. No consecration of a bishop shall take place without the consent of the Apostolic See.

<sup>&</sup>quot;2. No single bishop shall take upon himself to consecrate another.

<sup>36</sup> Jaffé, no. 255. Cf. Tillemont, op. cit., pp. 87-89.

<sup>37</sup> Tillemont, loc. cit.

<sup>38</sup> Jaffé, no. 257.

- "3. He who after baptism served in war, may not become a cleric.
- "7. A deposed cleric may not be admitted into another Church.
- "8. If Novatian clergy wish to enter the Church, they must not be actually re-ordained, but they must nevertheless receive a fresh imposition of hands, after the manner of laymen who have been baptized by heretics.
- "9. We advise that the priests and Levites should not live with their wives." 39

#### St. John Chrysostom

That same year (386), John Chrysostom, ordained priest at Antioch by Flavian, began his preaching career in that city. The fourth and fifth centuries did not possess a more eloquent preacher, and Pope Siricius had no mightier auxiliary in his work of reform. Jerome, ascetic and learned priest that he was, exercised his influence over a choice few whom he trained in study and the practice of the highest virtues. Ambrose, an accomplished statesman, exercised a preponderant influence upon the public authorities. But Chrysostom applied his activity and preaching ability to the moral reform of all classes of society.

Bishop Flavian of Antioch was advanced in years and little endowed with talent for preaching. He promptly relieved himself of the ministry of the pulpit and placed this duty in the hands of the new priest, who was then perhaps forty years old. His first published works showed that he possessed a remarkable experience of men and affairs.

"For twelve consecutive years at Antioch (386–398), and subsequently for six years at Constantinople (398–404), he preached almost uninterruptedly with inexhaustible talent and with constant

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. Siricius had spoken of this law in his letter to Himerius. Again in that same year 386 he refers to it in a letter to the Council of Telepta (or Zella), in proconsular Africa. See Vacandard, *Études de critique et d'histoire religieuse* (2d ed., pp. 102 f.). See the canons of the Council of Rome (386) in Mansi, III, 670, and a discussion of them in Hefele, II, 387 f.

anxiety and care that his sermons should be efficacious, that he should not leave uncombated any contemporary weakness or superstition."  $^{40}$ 

# St. Chrysostom's Preaching

Chrysostom was a born orator. Of all the masters of the spoken word, whether sacred or profane, he is one of the greatest. Says Villemain: "We are amazed at this man's prodigious labors, at the ready and ardent genius of this sublime orator, who saved Antioch, who disarmed the leaders of the barbarians, and who seemed to revive the decadent Empire. Chrysostom's scholarly but popular preaching nearly always gripped his hearers by the rhetorical figures connected with incidents of their life. The sermons of the priest of Antioch do not possess Bourdaloue's powerful method or his deep and close reasoning. The imagination of the Christian orator of Greece and Asia is freer. He has more ardor than logic, more pictures than arguments. He is less desirous of proving dogmas than of praising and inspiring virtues. For this purpose he is informal, persuasive; he and his audience understand each other. Now he is gratified at their pious attention; and again he complains of their coldness and their frequent absence. He is solicitous for their welfare outside of church. His is the office of a people's tribune and of the confessional, exercised in the forum and the sanctuary. It is a union of all that is loftiest in preaching and the most penetrating in the guidance of consciences." 41

The most intimate details of daily life are before our eyes when we read these homilies. They have come to us as they were actually preached, written down by stenographers and not revised by the preacher himself. Let us turn to one of his sermons on prayer. "Among the Jews," he says, "to pray one

<sup>40</sup> Puech, St. John Chrysostom, p. 33.

<sup>41</sup> Villemain, Tableau de l'éloquence chrétienne au IVe siècle, pp. 149, 179-181.

had to go up to the Temple, buy a dove, have wood and fire at hand, take a knife, go to the altar, and fulfil various other prescriptions. . . . Here we do not have anything of the sort. Nothing prevents a woman, while holding her distaff or twisting her flax, from raising her mind to heaven and fervently invoking God. Nothing prevents a man, who comes to the public square or who is traveling alone, from praying attentively. A man, sitting in his shop and sewing leather together, can offer his soul to the Master. A slave in the market or going to and fro or in the kitchen, if he is unable to go to the church, is free to pray attentively and earnestly. God will not be ashamed of the place." 42

Under the Empire, Syria was a very rich country. Chrysostom, in his homily on the forty-eighth psalm, describes the palace of a wealthy Greek of the fourth century, the gardens surrounding it, with their elegant fountains and shady porticos. He also describes the embroidered cloth and sumptuous clothing that were admired in the agora, and those silk shoes which young men were so afraid of soiling. One time, in an outburst of off-hand impatience, he said to them: "Hang your shoes from your neck." <sup>43</sup>

But at Antioch the poor and the beggars were very numerous. Chrysostom knew that many had fallen into this wretchedness through their own fault, and that some were impostors and scarcely deserved help. But he would not grant that the rich should be indifferent to these misfortunes and do nothing to alleviate them or forestall them. One day he began his sermon with these words: "Today I come to you as an ambassador. I have not been sent by the Senate, but by the sight of cruel suffering. As I passed the public square and the street corner, I saw stretched on the ground some unfortunates

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Œuvres de S. Jean Chrysostome (Jeannin trans.), V, 514, Homélie sur Anne la prophétesse.

<sup>43</sup> St. Chrysostom, On St. Matthew, homily 49.

shivering with cold and suffering from hunger. In summer the mild weather is a comfort for a poor man. He is almost sure to find work. Those who build houses, who direct excavations, or who sail ships have need of the poor man's arms. A poor man's body is for him what lands, houses, and other properties are for the rich: it is his source of income; he has no other."

None of the vices or abuses prevalent in the rich Syrian capital escaped the clear-sighted solicitude of the holy priest: neither the harshness of masters toward their slaves, nor the softness and luxury of the rich, nor the worldliness of girls' education, nor the frivolousness of women, nor the severity of the imperial magistrates, nor the sophistry of the rhetoricians, nor the gross superstitions of the masses. Chrysostom's works furnish us with the most finished picture of the customs of the fourth century 44 and "the most complete course of moral sermons that Christian antiquity has bequeathed to us." 45

But they are very especially concerned with one question: the relations of the rich and the poor. In that society, not yet freed from pagan individualism, one crime above all others stirred his wrath: the exploitation of the poor by the rich. "As you know, I am not against the rich," he exclaimed. "On the contrary, I am for the rich. I want to cure their disease. You rich men blame me because I never tire reproving you; the truth is that you never tire exploiting the poor." <sup>46</sup>

Chrysostom does not deny the right of private ownership. But often he praises, as an ideal, that first community in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Montfaucon, while gathering texts of St. Chrysostom, wrote his learned work on Les Modes et les usages du siècle de Théodose le Grand, which has been placed in volume XIII of the Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions. A more extensive and interesting study is the work of Thamin, Saint Jean Chrysostome et les mœurs de son temps.

<sup>45</sup> Villemain, op. cit., p. 169.

<sup>46</sup> Homily In verba David.

Jerusalem, in which the Christians of their own accord placed their individual possessions into a common treasury. He says: "How beautiful these words are, 'The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul.'" He did not fail to recall that the charity of the rich should be discriminating. He it was who said: "One who gives to a truly poor man, gives to God; but one who gives to tramps and scalawags, is casting his alms to dogs." <sup>47</sup> Having made this reservation, he never wearied in his praise of almsgiving and charity. "Mercy," he said, "is the queen of virtues; it is the oil that was wanting in the lamps of the foolish virgins. For without virginity it is possible to see the kingdom, but without almsgiving it cannot be." <sup>48</sup> Again he says: "The very tears and grief of love are sweeter than any mirth and joy." <sup>49</sup>

"The effect of virginity, of fasting, of lying on the ground, is confined to those who practice them, and no other is saved thereby. But almsgiving extends to all, and embraces the members of Christ." <sup>50</sup> "It is extended to Christ Himself. For He it is who is embodied in the poor. Hear Him say to you: 'Though I am able to support Myself, I come about begging, and stand before thy door and stretch out Mine hand, since My wish is to be supported by thee. For I love thee exceedingly, and so desire to eat at thy table, which is the way with those that love a person. And I glory in this. And when the whole world are spectators, then am I to herald thee forth, and in the hearing of all men to display thee as My supporter.' " <sup>51</sup>

#### Homilies on the Statues

It was especially when speaking of charity that Chrysostom revealed the innermost depths of his priestly soul. But, in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Letter 151, To Amphilochius.

<sup>48</sup> On St. Matthew, homily 47.

<sup>49</sup> On the First Epistle to the Corinthians, homily 32.

<sup>50</sup> On the Epistle to Titus, homily 6.

<sup>51</sup> On the Epistle to the Romans, homily 15.

second year of his preaching, an unforeseen catastrophe gave him occasion to rise to the loftiest height of popular eloquence.

Antioch was one of the most turbulent and disorderly cities of the Empire. Toward the end of the winter of 387, when certain taxes were being collected, the crowd rushed to the agora and, in a sort of madness, overturned the statues of Theodosius, the deceased empress, and the two young princes, Honorius and Arcadius.

The crime of lese-majesty had been committed. The destruction of the city by fire might be the penalty for such an outrage. It was well known how severe Theodosius was when carried away by passion. Three years later he gave a terrible example of this in the Thessalonica massacre. In Antioch, the day following the uprising, there was indescribable stupefaction. Bishop Flavian, despite his great age, resolved to make a long journey to the very palace of the Emperor and implore his clemency. He left Chrysostom at the head of the Church.

Chrysostom sought to restore calm to a people mad with despair, to warn them against the unhealthy agitation of certain professional rioters, to make them wait patiently for the results of their bishop's mission, and to distract them from their obsessing anxiety by turning their thoughts to the truths of the faith. Such were the purposes of twenty-one sermons, known as the Homilies on the Statues, delivered by St. Chrysostom. "They are discourses unexampled in antiquity, and for us are a monument of history and eloquence." 52 Bossuet is more majestic, Demosthenes more captivating. But no other human discourse gives the impression of a closer contact between a speaker and his audience. Closely following the emotions of the irritable and changeable crowd, which shifted from dejection to rebellion, Chrysostom now implored, now adjured, now scolded, now implored again. He made them tremble, and he made them smile. When illness compelled him

<sup>52</sup> Villemain, op. cit., p. 160.

to absent himself for a few days, the people's terror rose to the point of frenzy. Nothing but the intervention of a city magistrate halted the reckless excitement. The holy priest, when he returned to the pulpit, was filled with indignation, especially since the magistrate was a pagan. "I blushed and was ashamed," he exclaimed, "that after these long and frequent discourses you should have needed consolation from without." <sup>53</sup>

The final homily of the series informs us how Flavian at length obtained the desired pardon from Theodosius. In this account, Chrysostom mingles the outpouring of his joy with that of the people who heard him. One heart seemed to move both audience and preacher.

"The crisis of 387 is decisive in the history of Chrysostom's preaching. It was that which revealed to his public, and perhaps to himself, the power of his eloquence, and all the effort of which his zeal was capable; it was what established between himself and his public that sympathy which gave the one authority, henceforth, to say anything, and which inclined the other to hear everything." <sup>54</sup>

#### St. Ambrose the Statesman

In quelling the sedition in Antioch by his eloquence, Chrysostom had labored effectively for the general peace of the Empire. At the same time Ambrose, by his prudent policy, undertook a similar work in the West.

In the early days of 387, Emperor Valentinian II, who four years earlier had been obliged to make a partition of the West with the usurper Maximus, received a threatening letter from the latter. Maximus, assuming the role of zealous champion of the Catholic cause, reproached his colleague for not taking up its defense with sufficient courage and, as he

<sup>53</sup> Homilies on the Statues, or To the People of Antioch, 16.

<sup>54</sup> Puech, St. John Chrysostom, p. 51.

said, "for defying God and the primacy of the Church of Rome." 55 Maximus, who had reluctantly and with ulterior purposes agreed to a partition of the West, in reality was endeavoring to create a party in Italy on which he would rely for an invasion of Valentinian's States. The empress mother, Justina, who was still directing the court at Milan under her son's name, felt deeply wounded and humiliated at this move by the court of Treves. Only one man, she thought, was capable of negotiating successfully with the Emperor of Gaul; this was Ambrose. Once more she appealed to the Bishop's patriotism. He easily saw through Maximus' hypocrisy and, in behalf of her who was so recently his persecutor, accepted the difficult mission she now entrusted to him. Immediately after the Easter festivities of 387, he set out for Treves with an official commission to claim the remains of Gratian and the real mission of showing Maximus that his complaints were unfounded.

The circumstances made it possible for Ambrose to speak in a high-handed manner. Maximus, to display his religious zeal, had just put the heretic Priscillian to death, but he had pronounced judgment without consulting the bishops. We have already seen that St. Martin of Tours protested against the irregularity of such a procedure and the tyrant's bloody cruelty. This same attitude was taken by Ambrose. He refused to hold communion with the bishops who had referred the judgment of heresy to the secular arm. Then he charged Maximus with the murder of Gratian. "He admonished Maximus to do penance for having shed the blood of his master, and—what is worse—an innocent man." <sup>56</sup> Maximus trembled. The attitude of the statesman-bishop was as able

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Maximinus' letter is to be found only in Baronius, year 387, no. 33. Tillemont, considering its perfect accord with the information given by Rufinus (II, 16), Theodoret (V, 14), and Sozomen (VII, 13), admits its genuineness.

<sup>58</sup> Paulinus, Vita S. Ambrosii, chap. 6 (i. e., no. 19).

as it was dignified. Behind the ambassador's energy, the tyrant sensed a vigorous resistance by the court of Milan.

Unfortunately, soon afterward Justina had the weakness to recall Ambrose and replace him by a less perspicacious envov. This laid bare the real weakness of her government. Maximus, now reassured, no longer hesitated to act with force, and about the end of August, invaded Italy. At the first report of the invasion, Valentinian and Justina were panicstricken, left Milan, and took refuge in Thessalonica with Theodosius. Ambrose alone remained in the city and was unmolested by the invaders. But Maximus' victory was shortlived. Overcome by the army of Theodosius and brought bound by his own soldiers before his conquerer, he was executed July 28, 388.57 Valentinian II was now sole emperor of the West, and the death of his mother Justina, which occurred at this same period, left him under the guardianship of Theodosius. The death of the empress mother deprived the Arians of their most powerful support, and Ambrose's influence again became preponderant in the Empire.

#### St. Ambrose and Theodosius

The great Emperor and the great Bishop met for the first time after the defeat of Maximus. They were constituted for understanding each other. The close union of Church and State was their common program of government. The pagan emperors of the second and third century looked upon Christianity as an enemy of Roman civilization. In contrast to them, Theodosius, like Ambrose, considered that the surest means of guarding the welfare of the Empire was to assure respect for the orthodox faith. Many a time, and in no uncertain manner, Theodosius had already declared his loyal

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> For the chronology of all these events, we have followed Tillemont, *Histoire des empereurs* (1701 ed.), V, 834-836.

submission to the laws of the Church. And Ambrose, again and again, had given proof of his devotion to the welfare of the State. Painful conflicts, instead of weakening that sincere agreement and mutual accord, did but solidify it.

The first of these conflicts arose in the summer of 389 while Theodosius, yielding to the wishes of the Senate and the Roman people, was living in Rome, engaged in making sure in the West of the fruits of his victory.

# The Callinicus Synagogue

Rather serious disorders had broken out in several cities of the East. In some places Arians sacked and burned the houses of Catholics; in other places Catholics, even monks, pillaged Arian establishments and Jewish synagogues. Through the intercession of his young son Arcadius, Theodosius pardoned the Arians who set fire to a section of Constantinople. However, upon receiving the report of his agents, he sentenced the Bishop of Callinicus to rebuild, at his own expense, a Jewish synagogue which had been demolished in the course of an uprising. Ambrose protested in the name of Christian conscience which, he said, could not allow a bishop to erect a temple to a false religion.<sup>58</sup> One day when Theodosius came into church just as Ambrose was about to celebrate the holy sacrifice, the Bishop, standing up before the Emperor, would not begin the liturgical prayers until he obtained from the Emperor a promise that the order regarding the Bishop of Callinicus would not be carried out.

#### The Massacre at Thessalonica

A few months later a less serious incident occasioned very tragic scenes. About the beginning of 390, the people of

<sup>58</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 41, nos. 25-29, To Marcellina.

Thessalonica, who were very fond of a certain rider in the circus, rioted because this rider, after being convicted of immorality, was imprisoned. The crowd, deprived of the public entertainment which they were expecting, put some magistrates to death, including the governor of the city, a man named Botheric, who was a personal friend of Theodosius. In the Emperor's temperament a fundamental trait was a tendency to violence which his piety did not always succeed in repressing. On this occasion his anger overwhelmed him. "Since the whole population of the city was accomplice in the crime," he declared, "let the whole population bear the penalty." Some of his officers, who may have been jealous of Ambrose's influence, urged upon him that this matter was a purely civil question in which the Emperor's authority might be exercised without any consultation of the Bishop of Milan. In obedience to Theodosius' order, the people of Thessalonica were invited to the circus, then brutally assaulted by soldiers, who, striking at random, left seven thousand dead bodies on the ground. The Emperor, alarmed at the probable consequences of his rash words, revoked his order, but too late. Ambrose, in a letter to him, said:

"When it was first heard of, there was no one who did not lament it, not one who thought lightly of it. . . . Blame for what had been done would have been heaped more and more on me, had no one said that your reconciliation to our God was necessary." <sup>59</sup>

To avoid too violent a shock, the Bishop, on the pretext of his health, left the capital for a few days. He then wrote the Emperor a letter full of eloquent feeling. In this he says: "What was done at Thessalonica finds no parallel in men's memory. Hence there is only one remedy: for you to give public testimony of your repentance. Why should you be ashamed to do what King David did, and say: I have sinned in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 51, no. 6, To Theodosius.

sight of the Lord?" No particular penance was indicated, no reference was made to the canonical requirements of the Church. Evidently the Bishop wanted to leave to the Emperor's spontaneous choice the manner of expiation he would think compatible with his supreme authority.

Theodosius seemed not to notice this delicacy. Probably upon advice of the officers whose directions he had followed, and supposing the Bishop would not venture to accuse him face to face, Theodosius one day, accompanied by his whole suite, and as though nothing had happened, appeared at the door of the basilica.

"Ambrose prohibited his entrance, saying: How would you walk upon such holy ground? How could you lift up in prayer hands steeped in the blood of unjust massacre? How could you with such hands presume to receive the most sacred body of our Lord? How could you carry his precious blood to a mouth, whence the word of fury issued, commanding the wanton effusion of innocent blood? Depart, then, and do not by a second crime augment the guilt of the first. . . . The Emperor, who well knew the distinction between the ecclesiastical and the temporal power, submitted to this rebuke; and with many groans and tears returned to his palace." 60

60 Theodoret, V, 17 (alias 18). The Bollandist Van Ortroy questions Theodoret's account, for the reason that this scene is not mentioned in two very important documents: Ambrose's letter to Theodosius regarding the Thessalonica massacre, and the biographical account of Ambrose written by his secretary Paulinus. In this case, the scene mentioned would be merely a sort of dramatization of St. Ambrose's reproach of the Emperor, and the latter's repentance. See Ambrosiana, Scritti varii publicatti nel XVe centenario della morte di S. Ambrosio: Les vies arecques de saint Ambroise et leurs sources, by Van Ortroy. Father Van Ortroy's conclusions do not seem conclusive to De Broglie, who publishes his view in an appendix to his Life of Saint Ambrose, maintaining the historicity of the disputed event. I. He sees no reason to doubt Theodoret's truthfulness on this point; this historian wrote thirty or forty years after the event, among people who were in a position to know the facts. "Would an historian, writing in 1900 attribute to Napoleon III and the authors of the Fourth of September deeds and words which were not at all theirs?" 2. This scene and the attitude of St. Ambrose and Theodosius, not only are not a contradiction to the letter of the Bishop of Milan, but are their natural sequence; "although, in the matter of ascertaining dates and verifying texts, it is right to grant the last word to profound scholarship, yet when the question concerns the

Eight months passed before Theodosius decided to perform the act of humility which would again open the door of the church for him. On Christmas Day, 390, he came before Ambrose. "What remedy have you applied to so severe a wound?" the Bishop asked. The Emperor replied: "It is your office to point out the remedy, and mine to accept it and comply with it." Ambrose simply asked that a law be drawn up to cancel henceforth all decrees passed in haste and fury; and that a decree be issued that, whenever sentence of death or banishment was signed against anyone, thirty days must elapse before the sentence be carried into execution. The Emperor drew up the decree on the spot and entered the church, where he prostrated himself with every sign of genuine repentance. At a later date, referring to this event in his life, he said: "Ambrose alone deserves the title of bishop." 61 As a certain historian writes, "This interference of a bishop in matters of secular justice is a scandal to statesmen. But this drama has a mighty aspect. The last word was not left to sheer might. In this instance Ambrose personified not only the Catholic Church, but human conscience. His victory is one of those which we may rightly call victories of mankind." 62

# St. Ambrose's Scriptural Writings

The political missions performed by Ambrose and the task of governing his important diocese did not make him neglect

likelihood of certain events, the appreciation which follows upon study and reflection by an historian who was for a long time intimate with political affairs, deserves a hearing." 3. Theodoret's account appears to be confirmed by St. Ambrose's most famous disciple, St. Augustine, who wrote, in his City of God: "What could be more admirable than Theodosius' religious humility when, compelled by the urgency of certain of his intimates, he avenged the grievous crime of the Thessalonians . . . and being laid hold of by the discipline of the Church, did penance?" City of God, V, 26; De Broglie, Saint Ambroise, pp. 203–227.

<sup>61</sup> Theodoret, V, 17 (alias 18).

<sup>62</sup> Thamin, Saint Ambroise et la morale chrétienne au IVe siècle, p. 33.

his exegetical labors. In them he never lost sight of the moral teaching. Between 386 and 392 he published the following: his Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, which is ingenious and appealing, but often strays too far from the text; his De Elia et jejunio, full of fine, vigorous pictures that expose the morals of the day; the De Nabuthe Iezraelita, in which he reminds the greedy rich of the divine threats; the De Tobia, in which he describes and denounces usury; a Hexameron, in which he imitates St. Basil and, according to St. Jerome's testimony, makes use of works of Origen and St. Hippolytus that are now lost; the De Abraham, De Isaac et anima, De bono mortis, De fuga saeculi, De Jacob et vita beata, De Joseph patriarcha, and De benedictionibus patriarcharum, in which the hortatory element is predominant.<sup>63</sup>

## St. Jerome's Writings

St. Jerome, in his retreat at Bethlehem, whither he withdrew in 386, did not remain inactive; he published several commentaries on the Scriptures, and did so with greater care for literal interpretation. For the better understanding of the Sacred Books, he again took up the study of Hebrew under the direction of learned Jews. He also studied Chaldaic. The book of Tobias and part of the book of Daniel were written in this language, the study of which cost Jerome endless hardship.<sup>64</sup>

Paula and Eustochium, initiated into the Hebrew language, helped Jerome in his work. They read the Bible with him and, by their pious and insatiable curiosity, provoked explanations which St. Jerome, as he himself acknowledges, took from the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> On these writings, see Bardenhewer, *Patrology*, pp. 433 ff.; Largent, art. "Ambroise" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 943-945.

<sup>64</sup> St. Jerome, Preface to the Book of Daniel (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 492).

masters of doctrine. At their request, he commented on the Epistles to Philemon, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to Titus; for them he also finished the explanation of Ecclesiastes which Blesilla had formerly asked him to do. 65

In 390, by the aid of a writing of Philo, Jerome composed his Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum, and his work on the geography of the Holy Land, De situ et nominibus locorum hebraicorum. At this same period he undertook another translation of the entire Old Testament, based on the original, "according to the Hebraic truth," as he says. He began with the Books of Kings, next took the Book of Job, then the Prophets and the Psalms. In 302, at the suggestion of a powerful Maecenas, the praetorian prefect Dexter, he decided to do for ecclesiastical literature what Suetonius had done for profane literature, and wrote his De viris illustribus, "a brief account," he says, "of all those ecclesiastical authors who have written on the Sacred Scriptures from the Crucifixion to the fourteenth year of Theodosius." "Although it contains gaps and errors, it blazed a trail and is an historical authority of the first rank." 66

#### The Adversus Jovinianum

In Jerome's list of his own works, he places, immediately after his *De viris* his two books *Adversus Jovinianum*. This fact has led some to suppose he wrote them in the same year (392).<sup>67</sup> The heretic Jovinianus, who troubled the faithful of Rome in the time of Pope Damasus, not only spread his errors by word of mouth, but set them forth in a book that appeared in 390 and was at once condemned by Pope Siricius.<sup>68</sup> Some

<sup>65</sup> Largent, Saint Jérôme, pp. 43 f.

<sup>66</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, I, 7.

<sup>67</sup> Ceillier, Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés, V, 598.

<sup>68</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 42, nos. 4 f.

Christians in Rome thought Jerome was the one best able to refute the new heresy. They sent a copy of Jovinianus' book to him in Palestine.

A few days later <sup>69</sup> appeared the two books *Adversus Jovinianum*, a turbulent work, overflowing with animation. It abounds in those excesses of language for which the spirited Dalmatian has been so much blamed. No doubt he does not always weigh his expressions; his enthusiastic praise of virginity at times seems to place too low an esteem on marriage; and his indignation against the heresy leads to violent invectives against the heretic himself. Jerome calls him a coarse barbarian and says that his

"style is so barbarous, and the language so vile and such a heap of blunders, that I could neither understand what he was talking about nor by what arguments he was trying to prove his points. At one moment he is all bombast, at another he grovels; from time to time he lifts himself up, and then like a wounded snake finds his own effort too much for him." <sup>70</sup>

At the end of the first book, Jerome paints women too black. Of course the work contains something besides these pictures and epithets. With sound arguments drawn from Scripture, the first book proves the preëminence of virginity over marriage, and the second book refutes Jovinianus' theses on the uselessness of fasting, the impeccability of a baptized person, and the equality of heavenly reward for all real Christians.

When this work appeared in Rome, it stirred up sharp criticism. Jerome's enemies charged him with condemning conjugal union, with repeating the errors of the Manichaeans and Eucratians. So great was the outcry that Pammachius the senator, a friend of Jerome, thought it well to withdraw from circulation all the copies he could obtain. He so informed

<sup>69</sup> St. Jerome, Against Jovinian, I, 1 (Nicene Fathers, 2d. ser., VI, 346).

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem.

the Bethlehem hermit. A young monk also wrote to Jerome, pointing out the passages he thought blameworthy in the work. This last letter did not at all appease Jerome. He considered the tone of the criticism insolent and he contemned this "hasty hot-head, this ignoramus, this idler" who dared pass judgment on propositions without understanding the first word of them.<sup>71</sup> His reply to Pammachius, however, contained a prudent elucidation of the hastily improvised work.

"I am not so fortunate," he says, "as are most of the writers of the day—able, that is, to correct my trifles whenever I like. When once I have written anything, either my admirers or my ill-wishers sow my work broadcast among the public." <sup>72</sup>

But he retracted nothing of the substance of his thought. He declared: "I wanted to show that virginity is golden, marriage silver, and fornication filth. What reply can be made to these propositions?" Yet he thanked Pammachius for the pains taken in withdrawing the copies of the work.

#### St. Paulinus

This Pammachius, whom Jerome made the confidant of his inmost thoughts, was Paula's son-in-law, having married her daughter Paulina. Four holy souls—Paula, Eustochium, Paulina, and Pammachius—represented to the holy priest "the mysterious four-horse car of Ezechiel, which Jerome represented as being drawn by Christ Himself." In 392 Pammachius placed the hermit of Bethlehem in touch with one of his relatives who, weary of the pleasures of the world and of profane letters, aspired to taste the strong and wholesome poetry of the Sacred Books. His name was Paulinus. By his gentle and tempered language, by his inclination to moderation

<sup>71</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 50, To Domnio (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 80).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Idem, Letter 49, no. 2, To Pammachius (Nicene Fathers, 2d. ser., VI, 79).

in everything, Paulinus presents a striking contrast with Jerome.

Meropius Anicius Paulinus was born in Gaul, at Bordeaux, in 353 or 354, of a patrician family related to the Anicii.73 The Paulini had extensive property in Aquitania. Sidonius Apollinaris gives a description of one of their villas. The manor house is elegantly adorned in marble and stucco, and surrounded by gardens containing many statues; there are large rustic buildings, extensive vineyards, and broad fields where hundreds of farm-laborers are at work.74 "In those sumptuous residences life was magnificent and easy-going. A friendly tolerance prevailed. A rather accommodating religious attitude formed a common ground where pagans and Christians could meet without many clashes." 75 Representative of that state of mind was the rhetorician Ausonius, a man of refined mind, of courteous and smiling nature, but of such vague religious mentality that, after a close study of his writings, you might wonder whether he was pagan or Christian.<sup>76</sup>

Ausonius was Paulinus' first teacher and always remained his friend. The young patrician, under the tutelage of Ausonius and other able masters, was taught all the branches of knowledge of his time. At about the age of twenty-five he came to Rome, the cradle of his family. The Romans admired the culture of this son of Gaul, who was alike versed in poetry, oratory, philosophy, and law. One of the two consulates was vacant. Emperor Gratian named Paulinus to the Senate to hold that office until the end of 378. He who one day would edify the Church by his spirit of poverty and humility was the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> See Baudrillart, *Saint Paulinus, évêque de Nole*. For our sketch of St. Paulinus, we made considerable use of this excellent biography.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> St. Sidonius Apollinaris, Carmen, 22. Cf. L. Joulin, Les Etablissements galloromains de la plaine de Martres-Tolosane in the Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions, 1900.

<sup>75</sup> Baudrillart, op. cit., pp. 4f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 9 f. From the most recent critical researches, it appears that Ausonius was a Christian, but his whole thought was nourished by pagan antiquity.

central figure in those triumphal ceremonies of consular inauguration, beside which, it was said, even imperial celebrations were dimmed. In rich apparel he proceeded along the streets of the Eternal City, which were decked with rich hangings, strewn with flowers, and perfumed with incense. His consulate was brilliant. Sixteen years later, when he revisited Rome, clothed in a coarse tunic and carrying a pilgrim's staff, the memory of his consulate was still in people's minds.

The first call of grace to a life of poverty and austerity was heard in his soul when he was near Nola in Campania—over which he had just been appointed governor—where he owned some family property. In touching poetry he relates how, during the festive celebration in honor of St. Felix, the patron of the district, the sight of several miracles, wrought before his eyes at the saint's tomb, raised his thoughts above things of earth to the love of Christ.<sup>77</sup>

#### Paulinus' Friends

His marriage to a Spanish noblewoman soon afterwards was the second stage of his conversion. A great human affection was to lead toward the pure love of God that chosen soul, not yet fully detached from the vanities of this world. It was to St. Felix of Nola, his beloved patron, that Paulinus attributed this second grace. "I had crossed the Pyrenees," he says in one of his poems, "and reached the land of the Iberians. There you vouchsafed that I should take a wife according to human laws. Thus, at one stroke, you won two lives. You employed the yoke of the flesh to make as one the salvation of two souls and, by the merits of one, you compensated the hesitations of the other." Theresa, Paulinus' devout wife, has not been placed by the Church among the saints that are hon-

<sup>77</sup> St. Paulinus, Poems, 21.

<sup>78</sup> Ibidem.

ored by public worship, but our limited information about her shows that she was a finished model of Christian womanhood, helping her husband climb the road of perfection where God called him.

Besides the poet Ausonius, to whom he continued sending poems, Paulinus reckoned in the number of his close friends Sulpicius Severus, like himself of noble birth, wealthy, and eloquent, a man who was then considered the light of the bar in Aquitania and who, after his widowerhood, would, like Paulinus, embrace a life of prayer and poverty. Paulinus was also acquainted with the holy Bishop of Tours, Martin, who, when Paulinus was suffering from a disease of the eyes, cured him miraculously by touching them with a little holy oil.<sup>79</sup> Paulinus himself tells us that Martin loved him and Teresa with fatherly affection.80 Even closer relations existed between the noble patrician 81 and the saintly bishop of Milan. "Although I was baptized in Bordeaux by Bishop Delphinus," he writes, "still I regard the venerable Ambrose as my spiritual father since he it was who instructed me in the mysteries of the faith and even yet gives me counsel that I need to perform my duties worthily." 82

In 389 Paulinus received baptism. A precious poem, long lost, but found again at the beginning of the nineteenth century, reveals Paulinus' whole soul at that period. "This poem, possessing great beauty by the loftiness of its feeling and, in certain places, by its form, is an admirable song of thanksgiving and hope. Its declaration of detachment from wealth and honors forecasts the abandonment of all earthly possessions that was soon to follow." 88

<sup>79</sup> Sulpicius Severus, St. Martin of Tours, chap. 21.

<sup>80</sup> St. Paulinus, Letter 32,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> There is considerable evidence that St. Paulinus of Nola was a senator. For this evidence, see Lagrange, *Histoire de saint Paulin de Nole*, pp. 27–30.

<sup>82</sup> St. Paulinus, Letter 3, no. 1.

<sup>83</sup> Baudrillart, op. cit., p. 37. Migne's Patrologia does not contain this poem. It may be found in Hartel's critical edition, Appendix (Carmen 3), p. 350.

#### Paulinus' Trials

Soon afterward, Paulinus suffered some trial which must have been very severe, although we are not definitely informed as to what it was. One of his brothers died a violent death. Was he involved in some political affair? or was he assassinated? We do not know. At once Paulinus' property was confiscated, and his life threatened. In one of his poems he attributes to St. Felix of Nola the grace of escaping death and ruin on this occasion. "Felix came to my assistance," he writes; "this I ascertained from what followed." 84 It has been supposed that he was pursued as the brother of one condemned for a political crime. Another text gives semblance to the view that a horrible calumny blamed him for his brother's death. He exclaims: "Grant, Lord, that I may never be accused of crime, or even suspected: there is so little distance between suspicion and condemnation." 85

Paulinus and Teresa left Gaul and withdrew to a place at the foot of the Pyrenees in the neighborhood of Barcelona and Saragossa. There a child was born to them, but died at the end of eight days. The breaking of this bond was the signal for breaking all the other ties. By mutual agreement. Paulinus and Teresa resolved to strip themselves of all their earthly goods little by little <sup>86</sup> and to lead a monastic life. After that Paulinus and Teresa lived together as brother and sister in a union of prayer and almsdeeds. Their letters to eminent personages of the Church are signed: Paulinus and Teresa, sinners.

The renouncement would not have been complete unless

<sup>84</sup> Poems. 21.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> It was not a pillage, as Ausonius says. Paulinus and Teresa merely regarded their wealth as a trust to be used in relief of the poor. Even at the time of his retirement at Nola, Paulinus still possessed a remnant of his property. In the end, he had nothing. Baudrillart, op. cit., pp. 44 f.

Paulinus, like Jerome, gave up the cultivation of profane literature. Previously, in his poems, most of them addressed to Ausonius, he took his inspiration from pagan authors and chanted the beauties of nature. He writes again in verse to his friend, but says: "Why do you recall the muses that I have repudiated? My heart, now consecrated to God, has no longer any room for Apollo. A greater Divinity has subdued my soul." 87 At this time he wrote to Jerome, asking for advice as to what use he should make of his life and future studies. The hermit of Bethlehem answered:

"Make haste, I beseech you, and cut instead of loosing the hawser which prevents your vessel from moving in the sea. . . . Want of education in a clergyman prevents him from doing good to anyone but himself and much as the virtue of his life may build up Christ's Church, he does it an injury as great by failing to resist those who are trying to pull it down." 88

We shall see how Paulinus profited from Jerome's advice.

# St. Augustine

At the time the Gallic convert was turning to the perfect life, another convert, another ascetic, who became a priest a year before, was using his knowledge of Scripture for the edification of the Church and the refutation of heresy.

He was born, almost the same time as Paulinus, November 13, 354, at Tagaste <sup>89</sup> in Africa and was called Aurelius Augustinus. The Church, which honors him under the name of St. Augustine, has not known a single man, since St. Paul and St. John, who has exercised a deeper influence on theology and Christian piety.

The story of Augustine, from his childhood to his priest-

<sup>87</sup> St. Paulinus, Carmen, 10.

<sup>88</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 53, nos. 3, 11 (alias no. 10), To Paulinus.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Now called Suk Ahras (in Algeria), about fifty miles from Bona. Tagaste, in the middle of the fourth century, was a small town of proconsular Numidia.

hood in 301, is not so much a history of events in which he took part as it is the story of his soul. In his case, the interior life was everything; at least we may say that everything centered therein. The stages of his conversion were not, as they were in the case of St. Justin, stages of a pilgrimage in search of the truth. Nor were they a succession of providential happenings, as they were in the case of St. Paulinus. Rather they were marked by the action of two loves: an infinite Love drawing the soul of its creature to itself, and that of the created love seeking God, even when it seemed to be fleeing from Him. Those stages were marked also by reciprocal acts of two spirits: "that of the human spirit, which in its own depths finds nothing but wretchedness, and that of the infinite Spirit, unchanging and blissful Truth." 90 In Augustine's life the search for happiness and the search for truth were mingled and fused together.

## Augustine's Childhood

He was the son of a deeply Christian mother, Monica, and a pagan father, Patricius.<sup>91</sup> Growing up in the sensual and voluptuous atmosphere of the Africa of that period, he felt painfully within him, from boyhood, according to St. Paul's words, the struggle of the spirit against the flesh, the clash of the will against outward things.

Augustine writes:

"I had the will to signify what I would have, to those that should help me to it; but I could not yet clearly enough express my desires to them; for these were within me, and they without me; nor could the guess of their senses dive into my meaning. Thereupon would I flutter with my limbs, and sputter out some words, making some other few signs, like to my wishes." <sup>92</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Rousselot and Huby, in Christus, p. 809.

<sup>91</sup> Patricius was baptized and died a Christian about 371.

<sup>92</sup> St. Augustine, Confessions, I, 6.

And it seemed to him that "his mind was all upon playing," 93 because therein he found the satisfaction of an imperious need for activity. But, on the other hand, the thought of a Providence watching over the world, 94 of a Christ Savior, 95 and of an eternal blessedness 96 corresponded, he felt, to a deep need of his heart. He had a distaste for the labor connected with study, he was afraid of being chastised, and prayed to God "that he might not be beaten at school." 97 Yet he is proud to state that he learned to talk, not so much by the aid of a teacher as by the power of his own mind. 98

In the schools of Tagaste, Madaura, Carthage, and Rome he sought the satisfaction of his need of loving and his need of knowledge in the most intoxicating pleasures of the senses and the most insidious errors of the mind. But his heart found no rest. He himself says: "Lord, Thou has created us for Thyself, and our heart cannot be quiet till it may find repose in Thee." 99 This sums up the whole content of his *Confessions*. At the age of sixteen he entered into an unlawful and sinful union. He himself speaks of it bitterly, saying: "I was with much joy bound with sorrow-bringing embracements, even that I might be scourged with the iron burning rods of jeal-ousy and suspicions and fears and angers and brawls." 100 He felt that he must quit what he calls "the morass of the flesh."

When he was nineteen years old, having longed "to give up everything for truth," he fell into the snare of the Manichaean heresy. He was attracted by the promise held out by a philosophy claiming freedom from any restraint, by the hope of find-

<sup>93 &</sup>quot;Our mind was all upon playing." Ibidem, chap. 9.

<sup>94 &</sup>quot;Magnum Aliquem qui posset subvenire," ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> "This name of my Savior Thy Son, had my tender heart even together with my mother's milk devoutly drunken in," *ibidem*, III, 4.

<sup>96 &</sup>quot;I had heard, being yet a boy, of eternal life," ibidem, I, 11.

<sup>97</sup> Ibidem, I, 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Ibidem, I, 8.

<sup>99</sup> Ibidem, I, 1.

<sup>100</sup> Ibidem, III, I.

ing in it a scientific explanation of nature and a solution of the problem regarding the origin of evil, and by the feigned virtues of those initiated into the sect. Their doctrine denied that man possesses free will and attributed evil to an outside principle, thus destroying the idea of moral responsibility, and quieted self-esteem by giving free rein to the passions. <sup>101</sup> But Manichaean doctrine left many clouds and doubts in Augustine's mind. The frightful void of Mani's philosophy, "which demolished everything and built up nothing," <sup>102</sup> the immorality of his followers in contradiction to their affectation of virtue, and the intellectual weakness of their leader, Bishop Faustus, eventually freed Augustine from an illusion that lasted nine years.

At the age of twenty-nine, a new passion seized him, that of pure philosophy. He became enthusiastic for everything noble in the ideas of Plato and Plotinus. He noticed that, in the proportion that he freed himself from things of the senses, he entered into a knowledge of spiritual things. He then considered adopting a simple, chaste life, shared by a few friends who, like himself, were devoted to the unselfish search for the true, the beautiful, and the good. A flood of light entered his soul from the reading of the Scriptures, which showed him two great truths unknown to the Platonists: namely, salvation by Christ, and victory by grace.

He was appointed teacher of rhetoric in Milan. There he met Ambrose, whose sermons he listened to, first as an admirer of fine language, then with serious attention to the substance of the doctrine that was being preached. His mother joined him in Milan. Her gentle influence and the conversion to the Catholic faith of the celebrated Neoplatonic rhetorician Vic-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> "It much delighted my proud conceit, to be set outside of fault," *ibidem*, V, 10. <sup>102</sup> St. Augustine, *De utilitate credendi*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> At this time Augustine wrote a treatise *On Beauty*, which is no longer extant. <sup>104</sup> Confessions, VII, 20 f.

torinus <sup>105</sup> prepared his soul for the mighty stroke of grace which overwhelmed him, when he was thirty-three years old, in the garden of his house in Milan, in the autumn of 386.

Ten years earlier, while Monica was bemoaning her son's misconduct "more than mothers are wont to do for the bodily deaths of their children," <sup>106</sup> an aged bishop, witnessing her grief, comforted her with these words: "It is not possible that the son of these tears should be lost." <sup>107</sup> The hope which entered that devout mother's heart was soon realized. We quote Augustine's own account of that inner drama which ended with his conversion to the Christian faith.

## Internal Struggles

He says:

"Thus soul-sick I was, and in this manner tormented; turning and winding myself in my chain, till that which held me might be utterly broken; which, though but little, yet held it me fast enough notwithstanding. . . . I said within myself: Behold, let it be done now, let it be done now. And no sooner had I said the word, but that I began to put on the resolution. Now I even almost did it, yet indeed I did it not; yet notwithstanding, fell I not quite back to my old wont, but stood in the degree next to it. . . . The very instant of time wherein I was to become something else, the nearer it approached me, the greater horror did it strike into me.

"The very toys of all toys, and vanities of vanities (those ancient favorites of mine) plucked softly at this fleshly garment, and spoke softly in mine ears: Canst thou thus part with us? And shall we no more accompany thee for ever? And now I much less than half heard them, nor now so freely contradicting me face to face; but muttering as it were softly behind my back. Violent custom thus

<sup>105</sup> Ibidem, VIII, 2.

<sup>106</sup> Ibidem, III, II.

<sup>107</sup> Ibidem, III, 12

whispered in my ear: Thinkest thou to be ever able to live without all that?

"On that side which I set my face towards, and whither I trembled to go, was that chaste dignity of continency discovered, stretching forth those devout hands of hers. There were in company with her very many both young men and maidens, a multitude of youth and of all ages: both grave widows and ancient virgins, and Continence herself in every one of them. And she was pleasant with me, as if she would have said: Canst not thou perform what these of both sexes have performed? Why standest thou on thyself, and on thyself standest not? Cast thyself on the Lord; fear not, He will not slip away and make thee fall. This was the controversy I felt in my heart, about nothing but myself against myself. I flung myself down, I know not how, under a certain fig tree, giving all liberty to my tears. I sent up these miserable exclamations, How long? How long still 'tomorrow and tomorrow'? Why not now?"

#### Augustine's Conversion

"Thus much I uttered, weeping, in the most bitter contrition of my heart; whenas behold I heard a voice from some neighbor's house, as it had been of a boy or girl, in a singing tune saying and often repeating: Take up and read, Take up and read. I began very heedfully to bethink myself whether children were wont in any kind of playing to sing any such words; nor could I remember myself ever to have heard the like. Hastily therefore went I again to that place where Alypius was sitting; for there had I laid the Apostle's book. I snatched it up, I opened it, and in silence I read that chapter which I had first cast my eyes upon: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness . . . but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. No further would I read; nor needed I. For instantly even with the end of this sentence, by a light as it were of confidence now darted into my heart, all the darkness of doubting vanished away. . . . From thence went we into the house unto my mother; we discover ourselves, she rejoices for it; she triumpheth,

and blessed Thee, who art able to do above that which we ask or think." 108

In 387, on Easter, or at least at Easter time, Augustine was baptized by Ambrose.<sup>109</sup> In the autumn of that same year he lost his saintly mother. Not in all literature can be found pages of more exquisite feeling than the account of that blessed death and Augustine's grief.<sup>110</sup> The new Christian, wishing to realize his desire for the perfect life as soon as possible, sold his possessions, distributed the money to the poor, and withdrew to Tagaste to his already alienated estate, there to live in common with a few friends in poverty, prayer, and study.<sup>111</sup>

# Augustine's Early Writings

But it was not an inactive solitude. In an ardent soul like Augustine's, there could be no interval between conversion and proselytism. By becoming a Christian, he became an apostle. Following his conversion to the faith, in the autumn of 386, he published his three books *Against the Academics*. Therein he attacks the skepticism of the new Academy, from which he had suffered so much, and he shows that happiness is not in the search for truth, but in knowing truth.

In the course of that same year there appeared his two books On Order,<sup>113</sup> which examine the part played by evil in the plan of Providence. We can form an idea of his work from the St. Petersburg Soirées. It is a résumé of conversations at

<sup>108</sup> Ibidem. VIII. II.

<sup>109</sup> There is no foundation for the tradition that the *Te Deum* was composed that day alternately by the bishop and the neophyte. The author of this hymn may be a bishop of the fifth century, Nicetas of Remesiana. Cf. Morin, in the *Revue bénédictine*, 1894, pp. 49–72. But this legend expresses exactly the joy of the Church receiving as a son him who would be its greatest doctor. According to Cagin, the *Te Deum*, in its original form, represents the first type of the Latin anaphoras or canons of the mass. See Cagin, *Te Deum ou Illatio?* 

<sup>110</sup> Confessions, IX, 10-13.

<sup>131</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 126, no. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> P. L., XXXII, 905 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> P. L., XXXII, 977 ff.

Cassiaciacum between Augustine and some friends, in which Monica sometimes took part. Augustine desired to see his mother participate in these conferences which discussed the loftiest problems of philosophy, because he and his friends were inclined to apply only the effort of their minds to those questions, whereas Monica, with all the charm that exquisite purity gives a soul, brought them the accent of her heart.<sup>114</sup>

In 388, after his baptism, Augustine wrote two books: De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae and De moribus Manichae-orum.<sup>115</sup> In these, by way of contrast and opposition to the Manichaeans' secret immorality, he sets forth the virtues of the Church in her religious, her clergy, and her laity. He also establishes the theory of charity, the source of all holiness. In 388, at Rome, Augustine started his treatise On Free Will,<sup>116</sup> which he completed at Hippo in 395. Therein he begins an examination of the problem of the accord of free will with divine foreknowledge. In 389 he published his De magistro. In this work he develops his celebrated theory of the Word, the only interior teacher.

From 389 to 392, three important works came out in succession: De vera religione, De utilitate credendi, and De diversis quaestionibus. As Father Portalié says: "The De vera religione 117 was the fruit of the retirement at Tagaste. It is a little masterpiece of apologetics, not only against the Manichaeans, whom he speaks of especially, but against all unbelievers. He proves that the true religion exists only in the Catholic Church, basing his proof on the history of religion and the prophecies. The De utilitate credendi 118 shows that the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> The charming scene is described in *De ordine*, I, 10-11. Cf. Bougaud, *History of St. Monica*, pp. 232 ff. See also (*De ordine*, II, 26-45) the passages on the union of reason and authority, and on the place of liberal arts in education.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> P. L., XXXII, 1309-1378.

<sup>116</sup> P. L., XXXII, 1221-1310.

<sup>117</sup> P. L., XXXIV, 121-172.

<sup>118</sup> P. L., XLII, 65-92.

faith is not accorded to the blind, but rests upon divine proofs of the infallible authority of the Church." <sup>119</sup> The *De diversis quaestionibus* <sup>120</sup> is a book of miscellanies in which are treated questions of all sorts, philosophical, exegetical, and especially doctrinal. All the works published by Augustine at this period are the fruit of colloquies with friends or of controversies with adversaries. These writings are all inspired by an apologetical purpose.

From its beginning the Church never lacked apologists. But their choice of arguments was nearly always determined by a particular point of view. In times of persecution Christian apologetics was forensic, exegetical against the Jews and theological against heresy. But now, after the official triumph of the Church in society, it could be based on less restricted and more solid ground. It could be addressed, no longer especially to the persecutor, the Jew, the heretic, or the pagan, but to mankind in general. It could be based, no longer upon such or such a particular point of the Church's teaching, but upon the totality of her dogmas. It could be both defensive and constructive, dogmatic and psychological. Thus did Augustine's genius comprehend it.

## Augustine's Apologetics

In his *De libero arbitrio* he states its role in a picturesque and striking formula: "Our task," he says, "is to show, so far as may be possible, in the first place that it is reasonable to believe, and then that it would be foolish not to believe." <sup>122</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Portalié, art. "Augustin" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 2291.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> P. L., XL, 11–101.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. L. Maisonneuve, art. "Apologetique" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 1533-1535.

<sup>122 &</sup>quot;Ostendatur, quantum potest, primo quod non sit stultum talia credere, deinde quod sit stultum talia non credere." De libero arbitrio, bk. 3, chap. 21, no. 60.

We must not suppose that these two points of view imply two distinct parts in his proofs. In the argumentation which they arouse, they are constantly intermingled, since the apologist has a double purpose: to strengthen believers in their faith and to attract unbelievers to the faith.

Augustine takes up the extrinsic guarantees of Catholic doctrine and its intrinsic fitness. The better to reach every human soul, he does more than appeal to the miracles of the Old and New Testament, the fulfilment of the prophecies, and the marvelous spread of Christianity. "The great proof that seems to have impressed Augustine even more, is the holiness of Christianity embodied in the Church, and the moral transformation of the world. In his *De vera religione*, after sketching a magnificent picture of the moral revolution accomplished, he concludes that if the great philosophers, Socrates and Plato, were alive to witness the transformation, they would become Christians. To the Bishop of Hippo, as to the Fathers of the Vatican Council, the Church seemed a proof within everyone's reach."

As for Christian doctrines, "Augustine views them, not so much in themselves, but rather in their relationship to the soul and the great duties of the Christian life. Thus is explained, what at first glance seems strange, his division of theology in the *Enchiridion:* he relates all Christian doctrine to the three theological virtues. This he does because he considers in the dogmas the soul's three activities which must be nourished by them. Likewise, he is very brief in setting forth the divine mysteries and leisurely develops the anthropological dogmas of sin and grace. The starting-point of his inquiries

<sup>128</sup> De utilitate credendi, XVII, 37.

<sup>124 &</sup>quot;Christiani fierent." De vera religione, chaps. 3-4, no. 307.

<sup>125</sup> Constitutio de fide, chap. 3.

<sup>126</sup> Portalié, op. cit., I, 2239 f. Cf. Louis de Montadon, Bible et Église dans l'apologétique de saint Augustin, in the Recherche de science religieuse, 1911, II, 209 ff., 441 ff., 546 ff.

in all his early works, as Eucken remarks,<sup>127</sup> is essentially human, psychological: it is happiness, the *Fecisti nos ad Te et irrequietum est cor nostrum* of the *Confessions*." <sup>128</sup>

Our idea of Augustine's apologetics would be incomplete if we failed to note his conception of Providence in this world, his doctrine about the action of the Word in each of us, his theory regarding the place of love and humility in faith, and his idea concerning the force of conviction which is conveyed by the contact of the soul with truth. I. At the basis of every proof he places the great principle of the knowledge of divine Providence. He says: "If the Providence of God preside not over human affairs, we have no need to busy ourselves about religion." 129 2. Augustine considered that the intellect needs the light of God, the supreme Truth, to know the true, as it needs the grace of God, the supreme Good, to practice virtue. This is what he amply develops in his *De magistro*, and what he repeats again and again in almost all his writings. 130 3. No moral or religious truth, however certain it may be in se, enters the soul except by love and humility. "It is love," he says, "that asks, love that seeks, love that knocks, love that reveals, love, too, that gives continuance in what is revealed." 131 Again he says: "For reaching truth, the first path is humility; the second, humility; the third, humility; and no matter how long you keep asking me, I will give you the same answer." 132 4. St. Augustine also considers that a superabundance of proof reaches the soul by its contact either with error or with truth:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Eucken, The Problem of Human Life as Viewed by the Great Thinkers, pp. 211 ff.

<sup>128</sup> Portalié, op. cit., I, 2455.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> "Si Dei providentia non providet rebus humanis, nihil est de religione satagendum." De utilitate credendi, 34; Confessions, VI, 5.

<sup>180</sup> Portalié, op. cit., I, 2234-2237.

<sup>181&</sup>quot; Amore petitur, amore quaeritur, amore pulsatur, amore revelatur, amore denique in eo quod revelatum fuerit permanetur." De moribus Ecclesiae, I, 17, no. 31.

<sup>132</sup> Letter 118, chap. 3, no. 22.

for "error is recognized by its inability to comprehend all that it implies," 133 and "the light is its own witness, that it may be known as the light." 134

Such, in its rich and fertile complexity, is Augustine's apologetic doctrine, as it is revealed in his first writings. As we go along, we shall have occasion to note the equally great wealth and fertility of his doctrine about God, man, sin, grace, Holy Scripture, and the Church.

#### Christian Legislation

At the time Augustine's genius was completing the last of his apologetic works of which we have been speaking (the *De utilitate credendi*), about the middle of 392, a sudden revolution upset the Empire. To grasp its causes and appraise its effects, we must take up the account of political events at the point we left them.

Since the memorable scene on Christmas Day, 390, Theodosius showed the sincerity of his repentance by continually manifesting his zeal for religion and the Church. It was, indeed, something unheard-of for an Emperor to expiate a political crime under the impulse of his religious faith. The penetration of the Christian conscience into public morals is one of the most remarkable stages of the spread of Christianity in society.<sup>135</sup>

Evidence of this sentiment is found in the laws Theodosius promulgated (March 12, 391), granting freedom to all children who had been reduced to servitude by parents oppressed

<sup>133</sup> De ordine, II, 3, no. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>184</sup> "Sibi ipsa testis est ut cognoscatur lux." In Joan., tractate 35, no. 4. Cf. De vera religione, chap. 49, nos. 96 f.

<sup>135 &</sup>quot;We must insist upon this struggle against self, this close connection between moral and religious feeling, this redemption of offense by acceptance of humiliation, all new forms of the interior life; perhaps we should rather say that before them there was no interior life." Thamin, Saint Ambroise et la morale chrétienne au IV<sup>6</sup> siècle, p. 33.

with destitution. Then there was the law (July 10, 391) authorizing the lowliest individual, who was the victim of attack by anyone in high position or by a soldier, to obtain justice himself by force of arms. From the juridical point of view, these two laws were a direct blow to the most basic and traditional principles of the "Roman order" regarding the untouchable rights of property and authority. They mark a turning point in the history of law. Generally assigned to this same period are two laws stigmatizing and condemning to terrible penalties certain infamous disorders that had theretofore been tolerated in the Roman world. 136

The better to mark the Christian inspiration that prompted these measures, the Emperor at the same time published three laws directed against pagans, apostates, and heretics. One edict (February 27, 391) forbade all subjects of the Empire, especially those holding office, to frequent the temples of idolatry, "to raise their eyes to images made by human hands." <sup>137</sup> Another edict (May 5) deprived apostates of the right to bring legal suits or hold any office, whether acquired or hereditary. This forfeiture, joined to already existing provisions which made them incapable of bequeathing or inheriting by a will, rendered them legally dead. <sup>138</sup>

Lastly, another edict (May 15) forbade heretics to assemble in any place whatsoever for the purpose of holding a public meeting or a secret conference. These prescriptions were framed in most absolute terms. The expressive language in which they were made known to the public emphasized their importance. Yet it is a remarkable detail that they are all addressed either to Albinus, the praetorian prefect, or to Flavian, the prefect of Italy, both of them being officials notoriously

<sup>186</sup> Theodosian Code, III, III, I; IX, XIV, 2; II, 4; VII, 6, 7.

<sup>137</sup> Ibidem, XVI, x, 10.

<sup>138</sup> Ibidem, XVI, VII, 4, 5.

<sup>189</sup> Ibidem, XVI, v, 20.

attached to paganism. From this singular circumstance we may suppose that Theodosius, "though expressing his mind so decisively and peremptorily, intended making emphatic profession of principles rather than performing an act that would have practical consequences." <sup>140</sup>

In that same year 391, the Emperor convened a council at Capua. His purpose was to put an end to the Meletian Schism and to the propaganda of a bishop of Sardica, Bonosus by name, who, following the opinion of Helvidius and Jovinianus, was preaching against the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. The divisions among the Christians of Antioch were loudly denounced, and Bonosus' errors vigorously condemned. But, along with the forceful condemnation, we again observe great moderation in the actual repression. The solution of the Anitoch conflict was submitted to the arbitration of Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria. The duty of condemning Bishop Bonosus, after investigation, was left to his neighbors the bishops of Macedonia, under the presidency of the Bishop of Thessalonica. Under the presidency of these two affairs.

In all the acts of sovereignty we have been considering, the name of the young Valentinian II is joined with that of his brother-in-law, and the requirements of these enactments are addressed to all the subjects of the Empire, without any distinction between the East and the West.

But Theodosius was eager to return to Constantinople, from which he had been absent four years. He quit Milan, leaving Valentinian under the care of two advisers, in whom he had full confidence: Bishop Ambrose, who would enlighten the young prince about all political and religious questions, and the Frankish general, Arbogast, whose fidelity he regarded as no less reliable than his competency in the command of armies.

<sup>140</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'État au IVe siècle, VI, 339.

<sup>141</sup> Mansi, III, 738; Hefele, II, 394.

#### Disorders in the East

Theodosius left Milan at the end of June and reached Constantinople on November 9. Serious difficulties awaited him there. However, they would soon appear insignificant when compared with the bloody drama that was about to disturb the Western Empire.

Palace intrigues, revolts here and there, and abuses everywhere; such was the sight that the East offered him after his four years' absence. At court, two men, the praetorian prefect Tatian and the Gallic officer Rufinus, had been engaged in bitter rivalry to control the government under the nominal royal authority of the young prince Arcadius. Tatian seized it and—so it was said—made use of his power to engage in all sorts of dishonesty and corruption. Rufinus was declared to be the instigator of the Thessalonica massacre. The lives of both of them were open to suspicion. Upon Theodosius' return, Rufinus succeeded in supplanting his rival. But he displayed such insolence in the exercise of his office of prefect that a favorite general of Theodosius, called Promotus, assaulted him with violence. Around these men the parties seethed with excitement.

Under such leaders, the magistrates gave an example of scandalous, compromising acts and weaknesses. Even the "defenders of the cities" betrayed their title and office, and too often became the pitiless oppressors of the people, whom it was their duty to protect.

The orator Libanius drew a picture of all these disorders and presented it to the Emperor in a series of addresses. In this history of the Church, it is not our place to set forth all the legislative measures that the Emperor took to remedy these evils. He devoted no little pains to them, and they occasioned him vexatious opposition in his entourage. He missed Ambrose's candid and imperious speech. "It is not easy," he said,

"to find a man capable of teaching me the truth. Ambrose alone deserves the title of bishop." 142

Similar resistance was sometimes encountered among the people themselves, when the Emperor sought to pursue the consummation of religious unity by a progressive banning of paganism. At Apameia, then the second city of Syria after Antioch, the pagans, angered by the destruction of their temple, turned against the Christian churches, which had to be guarded by soldiers for several days. The churches were saved; but the bishop, held responsible for the so-called outrage to the gods, was seized by a group of pagans, who stripped him and seriously wounded him. To put a stop to such disorders, the population had to be terrified by more drastic laws.<sup>148</sup>

By good fortune, the Antiochene Schism was healed in 392 and did not add internal divisions to the external trials. After the death of Evagrius, who died in 392 without naming a successor, the episcopal tradition of the dissenters was interrupted, and the schism, without a directing hand, ceased to be a danger for the time being.

#### Arbogast's Treason

For some time Theodosius was in receipt of disquieting news from Valentinian. The Frankish officer Arbogast, whom the Emperor had placed at the side of the twenty-year-old prince to be his guide, showed himself more and more domineering. Soon it was evident that he aimed at seizing the power. Valentinian, opposed in all his projects and insulted by his insolent protector, not only kept Theodosius informed of the events, but also wrote Ambrose, begging for the assistance of his advice. The Bishop of Milan was the only one, he

<sup>142</sup> Theodoret, V, 17 (alias 18).

<sup>143</sup> Theodosian Code, XVI, v, 21; x, 12.

thought, capable of thwarting the machinations of the scheming general. He requested Ambrose to come to him at Vienne. "Come," he said, "and baptize me before I set out to fight the barbarians." But Arbogast was on watch. With Ambrose in Gaul, Arbogast foresaw that the courage of the young prince would be strengthened; he knew that there would be a bishop ready to talk to him face to face, a statesman able to see into his plots. The Bishop might be a rallying center for the whole episcopate of Gaul. In short, this would be the most formidable danger he had to fear in carrying out his schemes. At any price the event must be prevented.

On May 15, 392, a report spread suddenly that Valentinian II was dead. The official version was that the prince killed himself in a fit of rage. But nobody believed it. Not a single contemporary doubted Arbogast's responsibility in the death of the young ruler. But so well was the secret kept regarding the manner of this wicked deed, that historians gave different versions of it. Some of them said that Valentinian was strangled in bed by eunuchs of the palace; others declared that he was attacked by assassins while walking along the banks of the Rhone. A few days afterwards, Arbogast, who dared not take the scepter himself, had the soldiers acclaim one of his creatures, a former grammarian, Eugenius by name. Arbogast was a pagan. Thus was destroyed Theodosius' Christian policy in the West.

#### CHAPTER III

# From the Death of Valentinian II to the Death of Theodosius the Great (392-395)

#### Emperor Eugenius

EUGENIUS was a Christian by baptism and by the outward profession of his faith. But he was a Christian in the manner of most rhetoricians of that period, nourishing his mind solely upon the lessons of pagan antiquity, drawing therefrom the expressions of his literary style and the inspirations of his life. He was another Ausonius, without the latter's talent, courtesy of manner, and dignity of conduct. He had enough Christianity to make himself accepted by a society now converted to the law of Christ; enough ambition to yield to every compromise suggested by an unscrupulous adviser. No choice could have better served Argobast's designs.

One of the first acts of the new government was to decide that Valentinian's body should be transferred to Milan immediately. There was fear of demonstrations by a populace that already mingled with its expressions of compassion threatening murmurs against those it held responsible for this tragic event. The funeral cortege was scarcely across the Alps when it met Ambrose. The Bishop had left Milan, accompanied by the prayers of the whole people, particularly the chief magistrates of the capital, who commissioned him to bring back the Emperor. He could bring back only the Emperor's mortal remains.

The Bishop of Milan's return with the body of the young sovereign occasioned scenes of grief which Ambrose himself describes. "Everybody wept," he says. "Those who did not

know him, those who feared him, even those who did not like him, all wept. The barbarians were affected in spite of themselves. The crowd, all in tears, seized upon me, saying that the calamity would not have happened if I had been there. But was I an Elias? Was I a prophet to know the future?" <sup>1</sup>

#### The Funeral Sermon

At the funeral of the prince, the Church must make her voice heard. Ambrose was appointed to be its interpreter. How would he acquit himself? The people were expecting an expression of their grief and of their indignation. And, assuredly, he shared in both of these feelings. But how was he to give voice to such feelings without pointing out and cursing the hand that had struck in the dark? "Never did oratorical art face a more delicate task and emerge more happily." 2 What deep and restrained feeling there is in these words of the exordium: "Valentinian comes back to us, but not as we hoped to see him return. Upon hearing that the Alps were threatened by the barbarians, he resolved to come and share our dangers. He fell, struck down by death, at his first steps in public life. I refer to the suddenness of his death, not to its manner, for I weep and do not accuse. . . . How much better it would be for bishops to be persecuted by the emperors than to be loved by them. I was happier when I was the one risking my life for my prince than now when I must lament his death." For a whole hour the preacher kept an immense throng hanging on his words. The anxious and deeply affected people made him understand that their soul vibrated with his, although in his sermon not an offensive word could be found against the new ruler.4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> St. Ambrose, De obitu Valentiniani, 20, 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> De Broglie, St. Ambroise, p. 175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> St. Ambrose, op. cit., 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ambrose expresses an assurance that Valentinian may have been saved, al-

The new Emperor, or rather Arbogast in his name, timidly asked that Theodosius extend to Eugenius at least the tolerance which had been shown Emperor Maximus. And, in no small embarrassment, he notified Ambrose of the new imperial election. Says Ambrose in a letter to Eugenius: "At the commencement of your reign I did not reply when you wrote me, because I foresaw this would happen." <sup>5</sup>

#### Attitude of Theodosius

What the Bishop of Milan foresaw was the successful intervention of Theodosius. But the thing did not happen for two years. Theodosius was overwhelmed with many affairs and greatly saddened by recent mourning. Although not yet an old man, he no longer possessed the prompt ardor of his youth. He lacked the courage to risk a distant campaign. Arbogast, to enhance the prestige of the new ruler, brought him along with the army in a military expedition he made against the barbarians, that campaign which Valentinian was planning at the time of his death. The general's ability was crowned with victory. But, in the midst of his triumph, his imperial protégé met a troublesome reminder of Ambrose. A historian relates that, after concluding the treaty of peace, while he was receiving the leaders of the defeated army at dinner, one of them said to him: "Do you know the man who is named Ambrose?" "Yes," Eugenius replied, "and I am even one of his friends." Then the barbarian said: "I understand now what made you victorious. You are the friend of a man who can do everything. Let him but say to the sun, 'Stop,' and the sun would at once halt in its course." The usurper, in his attempts to restore paganism, will again encounter the Bishop

though he died without baptism: "Si martyres suo abluuntur sanguine, et hunc sua pietas abluit et voluntas." This is one of the most valuable testimonies of Christian antiquity in favor of the baptism of desire.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 57, no. 11, To Eugenius.

of Milan and will find him an adversary no less to be feared than the Emperor of Constantinople.

## Eugenius at Milan

Arbogast easily persuaded Eugenius to place his reliance upon a party. The pagan party, secretly resenting the destruction of a large number of their temples, and especially the suppression of the altar of Victory, appeared ready to withdraw from Theodosius' cause and rally to a new dynasty. A clever stroke of policy very soon brought this party definite promises.

The occasion presented itself without their seeking it. The head of the deputation sent to Gaul to convey the homage of the Eternal City to the new Emperor, was a personage very prominent in the pagan party, Nicomachus Flavian, a cousin and son-in-law of Symmachus. To promise him explicitly the reëstablishment of the altar of Victory seemed too daring. An expedient was resorted to. Eugenius promised to restore to the pagan senators all the salaries and all religious revenues that had been confiscated or suppressed by recent edicts. The senators might use them as they saw fit. No one misunderstood the meaning of this decision, as soon as it became known in Italy. Ambrose fully grasped its significance.

Shortly afterwards the Emperor sent word to Ambrose that he would soon arrive in Milan. This was a novel and critical situation for the great Bishop. He could not and did not wish to contest the legality of Eugenius' election, which, strictly speaking, did not violate any principle of the constitutional law of the Romans. Yet for Ambrose, at the head of the Christian people, to greet the new Emperor, to take part in his triumphal entry into the capital of the West, right after

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Neither royal heredity nor popular consent had regulated the transmission of imperial authority. To determine by what law it was regulated, would be a difficult undertaking.

a decision that was ruinous to the work so patiently accomplished by the Christian emperors, was an attitude repugnant to the soul of the holy Bishop. Ambrose therefore decided to go away from the city, explaining to the sovereign, in a letter, the reason for his absence. We quote from this letter:

"Ambrose, Bishop, to the most gracious Emperor Eugenius. The cause of my departure was the fear of the Lord. I will not keep silence before you, O Emperor, as to things respecting which I have not kept silence before other emperors. Consider how great God is. He sees the hearts of all; He questions the inmost conscience. We are not scrutinizers of your liberality, nor envious of the advantage of others. Not many but will put their own estimate on what you have done, all will do so on your intentions. Whatever they do will be ascribed to you. I kept back and concealed my grief for a long time; now I may no longer dissemble, nor is it open to me to keep silence." <sup>7</sup>

Once again Ambrose speaks to an emperor in language befitting a bishop.

Ambrose's journey through Italy occasioned impressive manifestations at Bologna, Florence, in fact wherever he passed. In one place there was a shrine for him to consecrate; in another place, virgins to be blessed. Sick people were brought to him, that he might pray over them. Everywhere people wanted to hear the words of this real bishop and father, strengthening souls against the last assault of expiring paganism. Eugenius, on the contrary, at Milan received a cool reception from the Christian population. The churches he entered were empty. The priests refused the gifts he offered. The efforts of some zealous officials scarcely succeeded in provoking a meager acclamation by a few pagan groups. But this acclaim found no echo in the city as a whole.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> St. Ambrose, Letter 57, no. 11, To Eugenius.

# Paganism in Rome

Paganism was humbled in Milan; but it took its revenge in Rome, where the memory of the old national religion was more alive than anywhere else. The senator Symmachus enjoyed considerable influence there. The activity of the praetorian prefect, Nicomachus Flavian, could be openly displayed. Not only was the altar of Victory solemnly restored, but the property of the temples was used for the celebration of the popular feasts in which all the pagan ceremonies were publicly resumed. A document discovered by Leopold Delisle in 1867 in the Bibliothèque nationale of Paris, supplies some curious details about this restoration of paganism in Rome during the years 393 and 394. We are told therein that Flavian employed three whole months in the "lustration" or purification of the city. The purpose of this ceremony was to show that the public religion of the Empire was still the old idolatry.9 All the feasts of the pagan calendar were celebrated. To make a deeper impression on the people, there were introduced also those foreign ceremonies of Egyptian or Asiatic origin, with their strange and mysterious rites which stirred the imagination. Flavian himself underwent the expiatory sacrifice of the taurobolium. Through the city streets pagan senators carried the statue of Cybele, mother of the gods, on their shoulders. The prefect even dared to offer honors and gifts to the Christians to induce them to give up their faith.10

<sup>8</sup> This is the Invective against Nicomachus Flavian, which Delisle discovered in a MS. of Prudentius. It was published in the Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, 1867. See De Rossi, art. "Le Culte idolâtrique à Rome en 394, documents tirés d'un poème inédit découvert à Paris," in the Bulletin d'archéologie chrétienne, July and August 1868. From this article we have taken the details of our account.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> On this ceremony of lustration, see Bouché-Leclercq, art. "Lustratio" in Daremberg and Saglio's Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines.

<sup>10</sup> For these details, see De Rossi, loc. cit.

#### Theodosius Declares War

When news of these abominations reached Constantinople, Theodosius' zeal was stirred. The revival of polytheism in Rome meant the ruin of his whole work. Ambrose had performed his duty as a bishop by declining to communicate with Eugenius. Theodosius thought that his own duty as emperor required that he should take up arms to save the religious unity of the Empire. Casting off the grief in which the recent events had plunged him, he declared war upon the protégé of Arbogast.

At once the struggle assumed a religious character. Theodosius prepared for the combat by seeking the aid, not so much of arms as of fasts and prayers. Sozomen relates that Theodosius, as he was leaving Constantinople, stopped in a church which he had built in honor of St. John the Baptist, and placed his cause under the protection of the Precursor of Christ. Arbogast, who took command of Eugenius' army, placed the pagan standards at the head of the legions. A colossal statue of Hercules was erected on top of the fortifications defending the entrance into Italy. The auspices were consulted. "We shall come back victorious," said Arbogast, "and will turn their churches into stables."

The first clash of the two armies before the fortress of Aquileia was terrible. Arbogast was an able general. He skilfully directed the sally of his forces. Several of Theodosius' officers talked of falling back to wait for reinforcements. But the great Emperor, in the midst of the danger, had recovered his old-time energy. He exclaimed: "The cross must not retreat, even for a moment, before the image of a false god. Tomorrow we shall see what the God of Theodosius will do." The next day Arbogast gave way before a formidable attack by the Christian army. Eugenius, surprised in his tent, was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Sozomen, VII. 24.

brought in amazement before the victor. Just as he was bending his knee to ask for pardon, a soldier struck him down with the sword. To escape a like end, Arbogast killed himself with his own sword.

Theodosius' first care was to notify Ambrose of the victory which he thought would forever assure the safety of the Empire and that of the Church in the Roman world. Those who had sustained his enemy, particularly the families of Flavian and Arbogast, he treated generously, promising them protection from any reprisals.

#### Death of Theodosius

Soon the Emperor's health was seen to be declining. The fatigues of the campaign had weakened him. The memory of the Thessalonica massacre still weighed heavily upon him with a remorse that every sanguinary sight revived. "We have shed too much blood," he said. When he reached Milan, he sent for his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, and divided the Empire between them. He assigned the East to Arcadius, the West to Honorius. On January 10, 395, he presided at a solemn feast celebrated in his honor. But he was obliged to leave before the end of the ceremony, and expired during the night.

The eminent services which this great man rendered the Church were fittingly celebrated by his saintly friend, the Bishop of Milan, who delivered the funeral sermon in the presence of an immense throng, setting forth Theodosius as the restorer of the Church and of the Empire.

An eminent historian, after quoting the chief passages of this sermon, adds the following eloquent lines: "The union of the Church and the Empire, of Christ and Rome, was never proclaimed in stronger language. If at that moment Ambrose surveyed his audience, he might have noted in the brilliant crowd of officers a young Goth who had taken part in Theo-

dosius' last campaign and was on the way back to Germany with his force of horsemen. It was a man whom his fellowcountrymen called Alaric and surnamed the Bal, the Daring One par excellence. The future destroyer of Rome was there, unknown and thoughtful, while the Empire was burying its last hero. . . . But it was not in vain that God raised up workers such as Ambrose and Theodosius. By consecrating to Christ the last days of dying Rome, Ambrose and Theodosius prolonged the Empire's existence scarcely a brief moment, but they preserved its heritage for future generations. By aiding the Church to extend her protection to all the achievements of reason and of human conscience which Rome. during ten centuries of power, had either produced or acquired, they did not, it is true, give to the Roman power the strength to revive, but they gave to the civilization of Rome the strength to survive after its domination had come to an end." 12

# St. Augustine and the Manichaeans

Among the chief contributors to the work of rescuing the treasures of Roman civilization for transmission to the modern world, three men were particularly distinguished in the period of Theodosius' government, from 392 to 395: Augustine, Jerome, and Chrysostom.

The Protestant Harnack, speaking of Augustine, says: "The wretched existence of the Roman Empire in the West seems to have been prolonged until Augustine to permit his influence upon world history." <sup>18</sup> In the preceding period, Augustine already appeared as a mighty apologist. By the publication of his *Contra Fortunatum* in 392 and his *Contra Adimantum* in 394, he showed that he was a controversialist not to be despised, and in his *Commentaries on the Psalms* and

<sup>12</sup> De Broglie, L'Église et l'empire romain au IVe siècle, VI, 423 f.

<sup>13</sup> Harnack, Précis de l'histoire des dogmes, French trans., p. 255.

his Liber imperfectus de Genesi ad litteram, he appears as a profound exegete of the Scriptures.

Fortunatus was a Manichaean priest. Adimantus was the most illustrious of Mani's disciples. The book against Fortunatus is merely the written report of a public discussion that lasted two days between Augustine and Fortunatus, at the end of August, 392. Augustine's reasoning was so conclusive that, on the second day, Fortunatus declared he had no reply to make, and left Hippo. The heretic held the existence of a principle of evil coeternal with God and limiting His power. Augustine proved to him that a God thus limited would be neither infinitely powerful nor infinitely good, and that evil is sufficiently explained by the free will of creatures.<sup>14</sup>

Adimantus endeavored to prove the existence of the two contrary principles of good and evil by showing them at strife in so-called contradictions between the Old and the New Testament. Augustine answered by explaining that there is no contradiction between the two Testaments, but a perfect harmony, that "the New is hidden in the Old," and that "the Old is disclosed in the New." The two books, *Contra Fortunatum* and *Contra Adimantum*, marked an epoch. For a long time, in the Greco-Roman world, the sophists had used the art of reasoning in the propagation of error; in Augustine's presence they were under the necessity of acknowledging that Christianity possessed not only the truth, but likewise all the resources of dialectics for its defense.

# St. Jerome's Commentaries

In the ancient world the grammarian was likewise a power. With the coming of Augustine and Jerome, he was forced to see that the Church had assimilated all the learning necessary

<sup>14</sup> City of God, XXII, I f.

for the literal and figurative interpretation of the texts. Both acquitted themselves of their task with unprecedented penetration: Augustine with more concern for the moral purpose and practical actuality; Jerome with a deeper knowledge of the Eastern languages <sup>15</sup> and a greater concern for the literal sense. The former was more a philosopher; the latter, more a scholar.

In 392, at Paula's request, Jerome began his commentaries on the Prophets. We know his method of work. He started by procuring, thanks to funds supplied by Paula, all the commentaries thus far published. These he studied attentively, fused them with his own interpretation, and then set forth the results of his labor in an exposition as clear and simple as possible, because, he said, a commentator's interpretation should not be in need of other commentaries to make it understood. He purposed especially to expound the historical meaning, although in many places we see him rise to a moral interpretation, which he always sets forth with warmth, sometimes with great eloquence. While he was writing his commentary on Nahum's prophecy against Ninive, his thought led him to the trials of the saints, who, after being oppressed in this world, receive their reward in heaven. "This prophecy," he says, "teaches us to detach our hearts from all perishable things, things that will come to an end on that day when the true avenger of the people of God rises up against the real Assyrian." In his commentary on Sophonias, we have the famous passage about the destruction of Jerusalem, one of the most eloquent pages penned by the hermit of Bethlehem.<sup>16</sup> His short commentaries (Commentarioli) on the Psalms, were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Recent studies by Schanz and Rottmanner show that St. Augustine had not studied Hebrew; but as he was familiar with Punic, a language kindred to Hebrew, he was able to understand the genius of the language used in the Old Testament. He read Greek, but with difficulty. (*Theologisches Quartalschaf*, LXVII, 1895, pp. 260–276.)

<sup>16</sup> P. L., XXV, 1353 f.

also composed at this period.<sup>17</sup> Critics today fix the year 393 as the date of their composition.

In that year also began the relations between Jerome and Augustine, through the instrumentality of Alypius, who had come to Palestine. Alypius was that friend so lovingly described in the *Confessions*. "He saw Jerome and spoke to him about Augustine. The latter had some knowledge of Jerome through his writings. But this journey of Alypius united them much more. Jerome was fond of Augustine because of what he learned from the lips of Alypius; and Augustine, who greatly longed to see Jerome, to some extent gratified his desire by seeing him with the eyes of Alypius, who was but one heart and soul with him." <sup>18</sup>

# St. Chrysostom's Preaching

From the old Greco-Roman world Jerome had taken the strictest methods of its scholarship. Chrysostom took from it the secrets of the loftiest eloquence. In the old cities of Rome and Athens, where people spent so much of their time in the forum or agora, the man endowed with a talent for public speaking, the orator, held a position difficult for us to imagine. Besides his prestige as a literary personage, he had that of a politician and to some extent, in social crises, of a director of consciences. In the highest degree Chrysostom was a litterateur, a politician, a director of souls. In Theodosius' reign, from 392 to 395, he produced his *Homilies on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, his *Homilies on the Epistle to the Philippians* and on the *Second Epistle to Timothy*, and his Explanation of the Psalms.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Vallarsi thought these commentaries, given orally, had been collected, not by St. Jerome, but by others. Germain Morin's discoveries and writings prove that they are in fact the work of St. Jerome himself. (*Anecdota Maredsolana*, 1895, vol. II, part 1.)

<sup>18</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, art. 61.

Of ancient culture Chrysostom possessed all that a man of his day could acquire. His teacher, the celebrated Libanius, said on his deathbed: "Alas, I would have left my school in charge of Chrysostom if the Christians had not stolen him from us." It is true that our great orator was not a statesman like Ambrose, he but rarely had a hand in affairs of State; yet he neglected no opportunity to imbue public practices with Christian morality. The partiality of judges, the extortion of Treasury agents, and the violence of soldiers found him a severe censor.<sup>19</sup>

But he was foremost the director of the conscience of Antioch, of the East, and, in a way, of the whole Church of his day. No one was better acquainted with the morality of his time; no one had a nicer discernment of the strong and the weak, no one more strikingly and convincingly pointed out the evils and their remedies. In one of his homilies on the Epistle to the Ephesians, he denounces avarice in these terms:

"How accursed is the altar of covetousness! When thou passest by this idol's altar here, thou shalt see it reeking with the blood of bullocks and goats; but when thou shalt pass by the altar of covetousness, thou shalt see it breathing the shocking odor of human blood. . . . Such for the most part are the sacrifices made at the altar of covetousness. They are not satisfied, they do not stop at men's blood; no, the altar of covetousness is not glutted unless it sacrifice the very soul itself also, unless it receive the souls of both the sacrificer and the sacrificed." <sup>20</sup>

In another homily on the same Epistle, the preacher denounces the shameful conduct of certain Roman matrons toward their slaves. He says:

"Does no recollection of hell come over thee? . . . And then after all these things forsooth, a woman will sit in state like any

<sup>19</sup> St. Chrysostom, Homilies: 82, On St. John; 14, On the Epistle to the Romans; 2, On Penance; 61, 69, On St. Matthew; Priesthood, bk. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Homilies, 18, On the Epistle to the Ephesians.

tyrant, and call her children, and summon her foolish husband, and treat him as a hangman. Ought these things to take place in the houses of Christians? 'Ave,' say ve, 'but they are a troublesome, audacious, impudent, incorrigible race.' True, I know it myself, but there are other ways to keep them in order. . . . 'But,' say ye, 'the whole tribe of slaves is intolerable if it meet with indulgence.' True, I know it myself. But then, as I was saying, correct them in some other way. . . . If she is a believer, she is thy sister. . . . 'What then, if she shall steal?' Take care of her and watch her. 'Extravagant,' thou wilt say; 'What, am I to be her keeper? How absurd.' And why, I pray, art thou not to be her keeper? Has she not a soul as well as thou? . . . 'But what then,' ye will say, 'if she shall be a railer or a gossip or a drunkard?' Yet how many free women are such? Now, God hath charged men to bear with all the failings of women. . . . Now, however, some are come to such a height of indecency as to uncover the head and to drag their maid-servants by the hair. Why do ye all blush? I am not addressing myself to all, but to those who are carried away into such brutal conduct." 21

In all the annals of Greek and Roman eloquence can we find more living and effective language, more pathetic and human?

## Christian Life

In the course of the fourth century the Church assimilated such elements of the ancient world as could be adapted to her doctrine and could assist in spreading it through the world. This she did by means of certain great men, and also by her institutions, ceremonies, and customs. Yet we must be careful to avoid exaggeration. Beginning with Ernest Renan,<sup>22</sup> Rationalist historians, unwilling to account for the wonderful development of Christianity by an inner force, have frequently

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Homilies, 15, On the Epistle to the Ephesians.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Renan, Marcus Aurelius, pp. 34-50; Harnack, Dogmengeschichte (4th ed.), I, 480-496. On this question, see Batiffol, Primitive Catholicism, passim; Grisar, History of Rome, I. 316.

tried to show that the Catholic Church was the work of the Roman Empire. Their explanation is that Rome made the papacy; the administrative arrangement of the Empire created the episcopate; theology sprang from Platonism; Christian liturgy, from pagan ceremonies; the cult of the saints, from the worship of the gods.

But the whole history of the Church belies such a hypothesis. Catholicism with all its essential organs goes back to Christ; He is its sole author. The marvelous discernment with which the Church was able to assimilate from the Greco-Roman world (as later from the barbarian world) the elements susceptible of strengthening and enlarging her influence, is, on the contrary, as Cardinal Newman has shown,<sup>23</sup> an additional proof of her own vitality. This we can readily note by studying the development of her hierarchy, her worship, and her works.

## The Catholic Hierarchy

So far as concerns the ecclesiastical hierarchy in general, no Father of the fourth century questions its divine origin. For St. Gregory of Nyssa, as for St. Ephrem and St. Ambrose, the Catholic Church, "the principle and reason of all things," <sup>24</sup> is "the heavenly Jerusalem that comes down from heaven"; <sup>25</sup> its bishops receive their keys from Peter, who received them from Christ; <sup>26</sup> their head is Christ, and Christ's head is God. <sup>27</sup> The emperors themselves speak in this same way.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Newman, Development of Christian Doctrine, chap. 1, sec. 3, no. 5, and passim.
<sup>24</sup> 'Αρχὴ πάντων ἐστὶν ἡ καθολικὴ 'Εκκλεσία. St. Epiphanius, Haereses, bk. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Apoc. 21:2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> "Per Petrum episcopis dedit Christus claves coelestium honorum." St. Gregory of Nyssa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ephes. 5: 23; I Cor. 11: 3. Cf. Grea, L'Église et sa divine constitution, I, 41-61.

"In different ordinances of the civil power in favor of the Church or even of the primacy, what we find is always a recognition of the pre-existing rights or privileges of the Church; of a transfer or bestowal of new rights nothing is ever heard. In fact, it is often expressly stated that the spiritual power or the papal supremacy, having been founded by a higher and divine hand, rested upon a position impregnable to the secular power.<sup>28</sup> The Empire, after its conversion to Christianity, even accorded—a privilege we find expressed in its laws—a higher dignity to the Church than to itself, on account of her divine origin and divine aim. These laws lay it down that more honor is due to the spiritual than to the material, to the eternal than to the temporal, to heaven than to earth. Hence the place occupied by the monogram of Christ and the sign of the cross on the imperial coins." <sup>29</sup>

It is equally true that the close union established between the Church and the State considerably strengthened the Church.<sup>30</sup> While the spiritual power was preaching the duty of rendering to Caesar, above all to a Christian Caesar, the obedience and respect due him, the civil power was mindful of the duty of rendering what was due to God and His Church.

"Armed soldiers protect the monogram, which had become the ornament of the Labarum, or Victory displays it triumphant on her shield. The Cross floats above the Victor; it surmounts the orb; or Christian Victory, depicted as an angel, holds it aloft before the nations; or lastly, it glitters in reduced form on the imperial crown.

. . . Christ is represented on artistic monuments as Highest Lord and Judge, and in public life also He is recognized as the Lawgiver. . . . The Emperor Valentinian accordingly describes the bearers of spiritual power as 'stewards of the Great King.' "<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Grisar, op. cit., II, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, II, 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> In this account of Christian life at the close of the fourth century, we will repeat several details already mentioned in the course of this history. But it will be useful for the reader to find them gathered here in summary.

<sup>31</sup> Grisar, op. cit., II, 5.

### Canon Law

Between the lawmaking of the State and that of the Church a reciprocal influence operated. The laws of the State were more and more instilled with the Christian spirit, and the Church canons became laws of the State. The ecclesiastical legislation, in its formulas, at the same time took on some of the remarkable exactness and clearness of the Roman law. This happy collaboration made possible a notable improvement in political and social life. To it was due an amelioration in the treatment of prisoners and slaves, the suppression of gladiatorial combats, of the abandonment of new-born children, and of certain immoral public entertainments that had become customary.<sup>32</sup> Christian feasts could be celebrated in all their solemnity, Christian charity could be practiced without hindrance, the apostolate could develop more rapidly along all the highways of the Empire; and the voice of the head of the Church could be heard more often and more clearly in all the provinces of the East and the West.

The authority of the Roman Pontiff was not the only one to benefit by this fruitful union. The authority of the bishops, based, like that of the pope, upon the divine law, increased in effectiveness by its adaptation to the wise organization of the Empire. The great legal divisions of the State were a sort of framework in which the hierarchy of the Church was fitted for its more convenient functioning.

For purposes of administration,<sup>33</sup> at the close of the fourth

32 Theodosian Code, VIII, xv, I; IX, III, I; xxxv, 4, 5; XI, xxvII, I; XV, XI, I. 38 The word "diocese" was in use in Cicero's time, meaning simply "district." It came into official use in the latter part of the third or the beginning of the fourth century, when courts were established with jurisdiction intermediate between that of the prefect and that of the governor. See C. Jullian, art. "Diocèse" in Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines, vol. II, part 2, p. 226. In ecclesiastical usage, the meaning of "diocese" did not become definitely established until the second ecumenical council, in 381. See Fourneret, art. "Diocèse" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, IV, 1363. Previously it signified a district subject to a bishop, and was almost synonymous with "paroikia."

century the Empire was divided into prefectures, dioceses, provinces, and cities. The four prefectures were under the jurisdiction of praetorian prefects, the dioceses had at their head vicars of the prefect, called eparchs in the East; the provinces were under governors. Each city was subject to a number of magistrates who were chosen from its own population; one of them was chief magistrate and was called dictator or defender of the city.

Upon Theodosius' death, the ecclesiastical divisions followed almost the same lines as the civil divisions. At the outset, when a town had a sufficient number of Christians, the Apostles established a religious magistracy there, corresponding to the governing body of the city. This was the magistracy of the bishops. Later on, when the Empire became Christian, the practice developed of giving to the bishop who lived in the capital of the province, that is, in the metropolis, a jurisdiction over the whole province. This was the origin of metropolitan jurisdiction.<sup>34</sup> Lastly, a higher jurisdiction, called patriarchal, tended to be modeled on that of the vicar or head of the civil diocese, but the parallelism of the two jurisdictions, ecclesiastical and civil, never became established.

# The Office of Bishop

In this setting, the episcopacy did not lose its essential autonomy. The rule for the election of bishops was always the choice made by the clergy and people. Various councils of the fourth century even laid special stress on the necessity of having a certain number of bishops take part in this important

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Called also primatial jurisdiction. In Africa, by way of exception, the title of primate was not attached to the civil metropolis, but to that bishop of the province who had been a bishop the longest. An imperial document, which was commonly said to have been drawn up under Honorius and Arcadius, the *Notitia dignitatum utriusque imperii*, gives the parallel between the ecclesiastical and the civil constitutions as we have set it forth.

act. 35 But, according to differences of place, time, customs, and feelings of the day, the election of a bishop followed different forms. In some places the metropolitan, or more usually the bishops of the province, merely consecrated the person chosen by the people and clergy. In other places the bishops proposed three candidates to the clergy and people, or, conversely, made a choice from three candidates proposed by the electoral body. Or again, as in Milan, for the nomination of St. Ambrose, the election took place by popular acclaim, with the assent of the clergy. On some occasions, there was a wider departure from the normal practice. We see synods interfering in the nomination of bishops, emperors arrogating to themselves the right to choose them at pleasure, or at least to impose upon the clergy the candidate of their choice.<sup>36</sup> This last abuse was a consequence of the official status given to the episcopate. The public honors and temporal advantages attached to the office of bishop were also the occasion of regrettable corrupt practices. The investigation of disputed elections was subject to the metropolitan, who passed judgment with the assistance of the advice of a synod. In fine, the institution of a bishop was valid only through his consecration by three bishops, after approval by the metropolitan.<sup>37</sup>

Once enthroned, the bishop became a personage of note in the Empire. From the time of Constantine, a bishop possessed competence to judge not only matters of a religious nature,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> The following councils: Arles (314), canon 20; Nicaea (325), canon 4; Antioch (341), canon 16; Laodicea, canon 12.

<sup>36</sup> Staudenmaier, Geschichte der Bischofswahlen.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> See St. Hilary, Letter 16; Council of Rome (386), canon 1, in Hefele, II, 386; Mansi, III, 1033. By virtue of these regulations, no bishop could be instituted in Italy without the explicit approval of the pope. The sovereign pontiff did not take any direct part in the election in other portions of the Empire. He merely issued decrees, watched over their application, and reminded the people, clergy, and even the emperors of the respect due to the electoral laws; thus his intervention, though very discreet and indirect, was undeniable. The election of the pope himself was subject to the same regulations as the election of other bishops. He was chosen by the people and clergy of Rome.

but also civil suits whenever the parties wished to submit their case to his tribunal. Besides the title "bishop" (episcopus, inspector), which at first was given them by analogy with certain Athenian magistrates, the people called them "pontiff," sovereign priests. This title of "pontiff" was not exclusively reserved to the bishop of Rome until the beginning of the fifth century.<sup>38</sup>

Certain marks of honor were given only to bishops. From the testimony of St. Hilary and St. Chrysostom we know that the faithful of their time bowed to a bishop to ask his blessing, and that preachers asked for the bishop's blessing before beginning a sermon.<sup>39</sup> The dress of bishops also distinguished them from priests. The miter was so special to them that, according to St. Augustine, they used to swear by it.<sup>40</sup> At that period the miter was merely a sort of band or narrow strip of metal fastened around the head. St. Jerome calls it the crown (corona); <sup>41</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, the diadem.<sup>42</sup> The pastoral staff and the episcopal ring were also insignia of the episcopal dignity.<sup>43</sup>

Onerous burdens and duties corresponded to these honors. Several times we have already drawn attention to the heroic devotedness with which the great bishops of the fourth century performed their duties. We will here simply give a summary list of those functions. A bishop's chief duties were the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Martigny, Dictionnaire des antiquités chrétiennes (art. "Évèques") p. 255. In the fourth and fifth centuries the word "pope" (papa) was a title common to all bishops. See De Labriolle, Une esquisse de l'histoire du mot papa, in the Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétienne, 1911, pp. 215-220.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> St. Hilary, Ad Constantium; St. Chrysostom, Homilies on the Statues, or To the People of Antioch, 3, 4, and 11; Martigny, op. cit., pp. 259, 551.

<sup>40</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 147.

<sup>41</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 26, To Marcella.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations*, 31. Cf. Eusebius, *H. E.*, X, iv. It was not until the sixth century that other ornamentations were placed on the miter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> The pastoral staff is of very ancient origin. Baronius declares that, according to the most reliable authorities, bishops used it in the fourth century. (Baronius, *Annales*, A.D., 504, no. 38.)

following: 1. the religious instruction of his people, imparted by himself or through priests expressly approved by him; 44 2. the conferring of holy orders; 45 3. the visitation of his diocese; 48 4. the administration of the sacrament of confirmation; <sup>47</sup> 5. the reconciliation of penitents; <sup>48</sup> 6. the blessing of virgins; 49 7. a multiplicity of functions connected with the legislative, judicial, and executive powers that were conferred on him. 50 It also pertained to the bishop's office to issue letters of communion to clergy and laymen who were going on a journey, to make appointments to ecclesiastical offices, to punish offenses of a religious nature, in short, to administer his whole Church. Moreover, he was not allowed to be absent from his diocese for more than three weeks.<sup>51</sup> Journeys to the court could not be made without the approval of the metropolitan; in Italy, of the pope. 52 This was early called the obligation of residence.

To perform these various duties, the bishop had several auxiliaries about him. The archdeacon, who is not mentioned earlier than the fourth century, held second rank in the Church. He was chosen from among the deacons and was not, as today, clothed with the priesthood. He assisted the bishop at the altar, watched over the conduct of the lower clergy, managed the property of the diocese, and provided for the care of the poor, the widows, and the virgins.<sup>53</sup> At the end of

<sup>44</sup> St. Hilary, De Trinitate, VI, 2.

<sup>45</sup> St. Gelasius, Letter 14, no. 6.

<sup>48</sup> St. Chrysostom, *Priesthood*, III, 18; St. Augustine, Letter 56; Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini*, 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> St. Jerome, Dialogue against the Luciferians, 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> This reconciliation could be made by priests when the bishop, himself hindered from doing so, gave them the power to do so. Council of Carthage (390), canon 4. (Hefele, II, 390.)

<sup>49</sup> Council of Carthage, canon 3; Hefele, II, 390.

<sup>50</sup> St. Basil, Letters 141, 206; Council of Sardica, canon 11.

<sup>51</sup> Council of Sardica, canons 11 and 12.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem, canons 7-9.

<sup>53</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 146, To Evangelus; St. Optatus, Against the Donatists, bk. 1.

the fourth century, besides the archdeacon we find the archpriest. St. Jerome is the first writer to mention this office.<sup>54</sup> At first this name was applied to the priest who was longest ordained. His duty was to preside at meetings of the clergy and to replace the bishop when the latter was prevented from being present by the celebration of the sacred mysteries in the principal church. Later on, this dignity was awarded on the basis of merit. The Greek Church and the Latin Church seem not to have had exactly the same discipline on this point.<sup>55</sup>

We have already spoken of the chorepiscopi. In the East, during the fourth century, they were valuable assistants to the bishops in the rural ministry. The thirteenth canon of the Council of Ancyra (314) and the tenth canon of the Council of Antioch (341) seem to suppose that the chorepiscopi possessed the episcopal character, since those canons attribute to them the right to ordain deacons and priests, in the bishop's absence or by his order. In the bishop's absence, they conferred minor orders, attended the councils, and signed the Acts.<sup>56</sup>

In the bishop's more immediate entourage, especially in the East, we note the following officers: the syncelli, who were chosen by the bishop from the most distinguished of the clergy, ate at his table, and were consulted in important affairs; the notaries, whose office it was to draw up official documents and take charge of them; the advocates or defenders, who maintained the rights of the Church even in civil courts; the archivists and sacristans; and the mansionarii (sextons), who had the care of certain churches or chapels. The personnel of the Western bishops was more limited. But in the East, where it was very numerous, intrigues were formed among

<sup>54</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 125, To Rusticus, no. 15.

<sup>55</sup> Thomassin, Ancienne et nouvelle discipline de l'église, part I, bk. 2, chap. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> On the character and functions of the chorepiscopate and the controversies regarding it, see Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, II, 1197–1237.

them and ambitions were stirred. Some syncelli even schemed for the bishopric; sometimes protosyncelli, at the councils, claimed a right to walk beside the bishops; and the primicerius (chief) of the notaries was often a power to be reckoned with.<sup>57</sup>

#### The Patriarchs

The importance of this personnel was especially notable about the great metropolitans, who were later called patriarchs. Their eminence was derived from the Apostle Peter, not from the importance of their episcopal city. Only one such was recognized in the West; the bishop of Rome, head of the Church. But the East was proud to have its patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople.

The patriarch of Alexandria had Egypt, the Thebaid, and Libya dependent on him. The patriarch of Antioch had Cilicia, Isauria, Syria, Phenicia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Osrhoene. The patriarch of Jerusalem had under his jurisdiction only the three Palestines.<sup>58</sup> Out of consideration for the incomparable dignity of the Holy City, the Fathers of Nicaea raised it to the rank of a patriarchal see, although maintaining the metropolitans of Caesarea in their ancient rights. We know under what circumstances the Fathers of Constantinople in 381 conferred the patriarchal dignity upon the capital of the East, with rights extending over the provinces of Asia, Pontus, and Thrace, with ever-increasing prerogatives that finally led its patriarchs to claim equality with the Roman Pontiff.<sup>59</sup>

This last, as patriarch, had under his jurisdiction Italy,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> See Hergenröther-Kirsch, Kirchengeschichte, vol. I, bk. 2, part 1, chap. 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> For a time he had Phenicia and Arabia, which had been cut off from Antioch. See S. Vailhé, *Formation du patriarcat de Jérusalem*, in the Échos d'Orient. XIII (1910), 325–336.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Cf. S. Vailhé, Origines de l'église de Constantinople, in the Échos d'Orient, X (1907), 287-295.

Gaul, Spain, Britain, Germany, and the two provinces of Eastern and Western Illyricum <sup>60</sup> (Macedonia, Crete, Thessaly, and the two Epiruses, the two Dacias, Dardania, and Prevalitana). But it was difficult to draw a sharp line marking the differences and limits in his twofold office as patriarch and as supreme pontiff in the West. Pope Damasus declares: "The Roman Church is above all the Churches, not by virtue of a conciliar decree, but by virtue of the words of the Lord: 'Thou art Peter.'" <sup>61</sup> In the fourth century, under the pope's sovereign authority, certain sees in the West were made metropolitan, such as Milan in Italy and Arles in Gaul.

In principle, the patriarch gave canonical institution to the metropolitans; the latter did so in the case of simple bishops. In the fifth century Theodoret protests against the claim of Patriarch John of Antioch to reserve to himself the consecration of the bishops, and criticized him for thus violating the rights of the metropolitans. <sup>62</sup> But such protests could not arise against the Pontiff of Rome. Pope Siricius, as we have seen, promulgated canonical decisions having obligatory force for the Churches of Spain and Africa.

We have also seen what was the position of the Roman Pontiff in the councils. He confirmed the decisions of the ecumenical or universal councils. Local councils, whether diocesan, provincial, or even general for the East or for Africa, lost all authority if the bishop of Rome was opposed to them. No other bishop could claim such a right.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> On ecclesiastical Illyria and its varied vicissitudes, see Duchesne, The Churches Separated from Rome, pp. 154 ff., and Vailhé, Annexion de l'Illyricum au patriarcat æcuménique, in the Échos d'Orient, XIV (1911), 29-36.

<sup>61</sup> Mansi, III, 158.

<sup>62</sup> Le Quien, Oriens christianus, II, 669 ff.

<sup>63</sup> From the beginning of the fourth century the presence of three consecrating prelates was required in the ordination of a bishop; but if the pope consecrated, no other prelates were required, because he represented the whole body of the episcopate. See Grisar, History of Rome, III, 280, and Duchesne, Christian Worship, pp. 361, 378.

#### The Priests

At the close of the fourth century, patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishops were at the head of a vast array of clergy of every rank: priests, deacons, subdeacons, readers, acolytes, exorcists, and porters.<sup>64</sup>

The priest's functions had gone through three distinct phases. During the first three centuries, he had no other mission but to celebrate the sacred mysteries at the same time as the bishop in the cathedral and to aid him in the government of his Church, for which the bishop alone was directly responsible. In the fourth century, when other churches besides the cathedral were built in the large cities, priests were assigned to them as "titulars" or "cardinals." But their duties were limited to informing the bishop of what concerned the government of the Church, taking charge of burials and superintending the keepers of the cemeteries, 65 to giving the faithful the instruction necessary for the reception of baptism and for the absolution of their sins; 66 the administration of the sacraments and the liturgy of the holy sacrifice were reserved to the bishop.<sup>67</sup> When the head of the Church wished to celebrate the sacred mysteries in honor of a saint especially venerated in a church of his episcopal city, he went to that church accompanied by his clergy.

Perhaps the titular priests already had the power, within the confines of their territory, to administer the sacrament of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> We do not mention tonsured clerics. The tonsure of secular clerics does not go back beyond the sixth century. At first it was not a rite distinct from the conferring of the first minor order. Probably it was not at first a liturgical rite at all. As a special liturgical rite, distinct from minor orders, it seems not to go back earlier than the eighth century in the West and the twelfth century in the East. Cf. Many, De sacra ordinatione, pp. 37-40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> De Rossi, Roma sotteranea, III, 520, ff.

<sup>68</sup> Duchesne, Liber pontificalis, I, 165 note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> St. Athanasius, Apologia ad imperatorem Constantium.

extreme unction, to reconcile penitents in case of necessity and heretics in danger of death, to select "psalmists" or chanters to sing the psalms in their church. But the texts referring to these various functions are doubtful or are later than the fourth century.

A third phase of the priestly ministry began at the time of the formation of rural parishes. At the beginning, the priest in charge of the government of the parish, the parish priest properly so called, may perhaps, so far as concerned the celebration of liturgical functions, have merely obtained the Eucharist consecrated by the bishop in the city church and distributed it to the faithful of his district, and have served the bishop when the latter came to officiate in the rural parish. Only for the great feasts did the country parish priest, accompanied by his flock, go to the city church, where the bishop, assisted by all his clergy, officiated before all his people.<sup>68</sup>

### Deacons

Below the priests, the deacons, as in the first centuries, occupied an important place. In the liturgical offices, they received the offerings of the faithful and placed them on the altar,<sup>69</sup> then ascended the pulpit to read the Gospel;<sup>70</sup> and they distributed the Holy Eucharist to the people.<sup>71</sup> It was also

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Imbart de la Tour, Les Paroisses rurales du IVe au XIe siècle, pp. 62 f. That the rural parishes in the fourth century did not yet have, or at least not always, the exercise of complete public worship, is evidenced by the fact that often a mere deacon assumed the government of the parish. But, as parishes became more completely organized, this situation became increasingly rare. (Imbart de la Tour, op. cit., p. 619.)

<sup>69</sup> St. Jerome, In Jeremiam, XI, 15 f.; In Ezechielem, XVIII, 5 f.

<sup>70</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 147, To Sabinianus, no. 6; P. L., XXII, 1200.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Apparently certain deacons even undertook to consecrate the Blessed Sacrament. They were expressly forbidden to do this by the Council of Arles (314), canon 15. (Hefele, I, 193.) "Binterim gives another interpretation. By offerre he understands the administration of the Eucharist to the faithful; and he explains the canon in this sense: 'The deacons ought not to administer the communion to

their duty to direct the movements of the faithful present at the celebration of the holy offices. It was the deacons' voice that called out to the people during the ceremony: Flectamus genua (Let us bend our knees); Procedamus in pace (Let us proceed in peace); Ite, missa est (Go, it is time to leave).<sup>72</sup> With the bishop's permission, the deacons could also preach, baptize solemnly, and, in case of extreme necessity in the absence of any priest, hear a sinner's confession and impose a penance upon him. This is to be inferred from a famous text of St. Cyprian; <sup>73</sup> but we cannot deduce from this text that the deacons ever had the power to administer the sacrament of penance.

### Subdeacons

The origin of the office of subdeacon seems to go back to the beginning of the third, or perhaps the end of the second century in the Latin Church and a little later in the Greek Church.<sup>74</sup> His functions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy were much more humble.<sup>75</sup> The Council of Laodicea admonished subdeacons not to occupy places in the *diaconicum* (the place reserved for the deacons), not to touch the sacred vessels during the divine office, and not to wear the *orarium* or stole, the

the faithful in various places, but only in the churches which are assigned to them." Hefele, I, 193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Many, De sacra ordinatione, p. 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Many, op. cit., p. 51. St. Cyprian's text reads as follows: "They who have received letters from the martyrs... may make confession of their sin before any presbyter at hand or, if a presbyter shall not be found, and death approaches, then even before a deacon; that so receiving imposition of hands unto repentance, they may go to the Lord with peace," St. Cyprian, Letter 18 (Ad clerum); Oxford Library, vol. XVII.

<sup>74</sup> Many, op. cit., p. 30. Cf. A. Catoire, Les Sous-diaconat dans l'Église grecque, in the Échos d'Orient, XIII (1910), 22–25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> The Greeks still regard the subdiaconate as a minor order. It was not until the twelfth century that the Latin Church reckoned it among the major orders. (Many, op. cit., pp. 31-33.)

vestment belonging properly to the higher orders.<sup>76</sup> Their chief duties were to prepare the sacred vessels,<sup>77</sup> to keep watch at the church doors, to see that catechumens and penitents left the church at the proper time, and, in a general way, to see that good order was preserved during the ceremony. Several passages of St. Cyprian inform us also that the bishops had their letters carried by subdeacons.<sup>78</sup> The practice of having the Epistle read by the subdeacon at solemn mass seems to have originated in Spain in the fourth century; from there it spread to other countries.<sup>79</sup>

## Acolytes

The acolytes, as the etymology of the word indicates, were the "companions" of the bishops and priests. In Africa their duties consisted simply in lighting the candles and presenting the wine for the celebration of the mass. In Rome they were, from their origin, <sup>80</sup> charged with the duty of carrying to the absent, not only the eulogia or blessed bread, but also the Eucharist. <sup>81</sup> The following were their functions during mass, at least in Rome. When communion time came, the acolytes, each wearing a little bag hanging from his neck, went up to the altar. There they stood, some on the right, others on the left. The subdeacons then stood before them and held open the little bags, into which the archdeacon put the bread consecrated for the people. Thereupon the acolytes separated. Some

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Hefele, II, 313.

<sup>77</sup> Statuta Ecclesiae antiqua, in Bruns, Concilia, I, 141.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> St. Cyprian, Letter 18 (Ad clerum), P. L., IV, 284.

<sup>79</sup> Martene, De antiquis Ecclesiae ritibus, bk. 1, chap. 8, art. 8, no. 15.

<sup>80</sup> Their origin seems to go back to the middle of the third century. (Leclercq, art. "Acolythe," in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne, I, 349.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> The acolyte Tarcisius was martyred because he refused to give up the sacred Species which he was carrying to some absent Christians. This function of acolytes to bring the Eucharist to the faithful was abolished in the fifth century. (Leclercq, loc. cit.)

carried their bags to the bishops who were at the pope's right, if any such bishops were present. The other acolytes presented their bags to the priests on the left. The latter then broke the loaves upon two patens, which two subdeacons held before the acolytes. This function was regarded as so essential to the order of acolytes that they were handed a bag at their ordination ceremony. Sa

### Exorcists and Porters

The duties of exorcists were closely connected with the preparation for baptism. These clerics drove out the devil by imposing their hands upon possessed persons and reciting public prayers. The porters, considered the lowest rank of the hierarchy, were, as their name indicates, placed in charge of the doors of the church. Their duty was to assign the penitents and catechumens to their respective places. They announced to the faithful the days and hours of meetings. And they had the care of objects belonging to the church. This is why lodging was generally provided for them in rooms just outside the basilica.<sup>84</sup>

### Readers

The reader's office was to read the Holy Scriptures publicly in the church. For this function young men or even boys were often chosen. In times of persecution this honor was also given to Christians who had confessed their faith before the executioners. To perform his function, the reader went into the pulpit—sometimes called "the readers' tribune." It was also his duty to have custody of the sacred Books.

<sup>82</sup> Martigny, art. "Acolythe," in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne, I, 10.

<sup>88</sup> Leclercq, Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, I, 353.

<sup>84</sup> No mention of exorcists or porters is found before the third century.

"In the fourth century this order was preëminently the first of the ministry, and constituted a sort of probationary stage. Young clerics began their career in it and remained lectors until they had reached an adult age, which was a necessary qualification for receiving superior orders. Most of the ecclesiastical careers of which the details are known to us began with the lectorate. Such was the case with St. Felix of Nola, St. Eusebius of Vercelli, the father of Pope Damasus, the Popes Liberius and Siricius. Their silvery voices penetrated the vast spaces of the basilicas and were heard by the most distant portions of the congregation. They even came to be constituted as a corporation (schola lectorum) at an early date, though the existence of this body at Rome, it is true, is not attested by any specific document. These scholae, however, were to be found in other Churches, and, at Rome, the schola cantorum, of which there is clear evidence from the seventh century onwards, consisted mainly of lectors." 85

#### Ordination

Ordination to minor orders was performed by the touching of the insignia of the order accompanied by certain formulas which have been preserved in the *Statuta Ecclesiae antiqua*. The young clerics were trained in the schools of their respective bishops. Some studied in the monasteries or attended the classes in one of the great schools, such as the exegetical School of Antioch. But, up to the time of St. Augustine, we do not find any special organization for the spiritual training and the intellectual education of young clerics.

For advancement to major orders the candidates needed a public testimonial of the people, who ordinarily acclaimed them by these words: "You are worthy." <sup>87</sup> Ignorance of religion, the status of the neophyte, the fact of being married a second time or of having committed some grave crime, were reasons for exclusion. The ordination of subdeacons took

<sup>85</sup> Duchesne, Christian Worship, pp. 334 f.

<sup>86</sup> See these statuta and a commentary on them in Hefele, II, 410 ff.

<sup>87</sup> Council of Hippo (393), canon 20, Hefele, II, 398.

place in the same manner as in the case of minor clerics. Deacons and priests were ordained by the imposition of the hands of the priests present at the ceremony.<sup>88</sup> Neither the *Statuta* nor the *Pontificale* as given by St. Isidore of Seville speaks of the anointing of the hands. This practice seems to have sprung up later, in England.<sup>89</sup> No one could be admitted to priestly ordination before the age of thirty, or at least twenty-five.<sup>90</sup>

### Clerical Dress

All tradition, ever since Apostolic times, marked an essential distinction between the faithful and the clergy. But in civil life the clergy were not distinguished from the laity by any outward indication in dress. The earliest mosaics show the bishops of the fourth century wearing a long, wide mantle, sufficiently ample to envelop the whole body, with the lower part of the cloak held up by the arms or thrown over the shoulders. This was the *paenula*, the primitive form of the cope and chasuble. But monuments of unquestionable authenticity show laymen dressed in the very same manner. <sup>91</sup> This vestment does not have a liturgical character until later, when the *paenula* gradually disappeared as a profane garment.

The cleric also was undistinguished from the popular classes by his manual labor.

"Among the clergy," says Grisar, "manual labor was quite customary, and still more so was this the case among the monks. The clergy lived amongst the poor, sharing their toil. In heathen times people had left agricultural work, the crafts, and personal service to despised slaves, as occupations unworthy of a free citizen. Aristotle

<sup>88</sup> Statuta ecclesiae antiqua, canon 3.

<sup>89</sup> Many, De sacra ordinatione, pp. 445 f.

<sup>90</sup> The age required for the ordination of bishops was thirty-five; in some countries it was forty-five.

<sup>91</sup> For instance, in the engraving on a glass cup which is shown in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, I, 2275.

held that intellectual superiority and nobility of mind were incompatible with personal labor. 92 When, however, our divine Savior, during the long years He spent at Nazareth, had set an example of work; when the Apostles and saints had, by word and deed, raised manual labor to its original dignity in the world, Christianity hallowed and united the family by the bond of ready toil. In devoting themselves to manual labor the clergy were, therefore, acting partly from necessity and partly from voluntary devotion, seeking thereby to bring into honor among their contemporaries the principles of poverty and work inculcated by the Gospel. In the Frankish Church especially, ministers of the altar were noted for the zealous way they labored, and for their efforts to induce the people to do likewise. Christianity, by furthering in the West the principle and practice of work, accomplished two things. It overcame the handed-down habits of the ancient world, which wasted its strength, both mental and physical, in indolence and pleasure. At the same time it harnessed to useful work that wild craving for action shared by the new nations, whose vigor and inconstancy it tamed, making them settle down to a life of order and self-denial." 93

# Clerical Celibacy

There is, however, one point which generally distinguished the clergy, at least those in major orders, from the laity; it was the law of celibacy. At the close of the fourth century this law was so widely followed that St. Jerome might write in his book against Vigilantius:

"What are the Churches of the East to do? What is to become of the Egyptian Churches and those belonging to the Apostolic Seat, which accept for the ministry only men who are virgins, or those who practice continency, or, if married, abandon their conjugal rights?" <sup>94</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Aristotle, Politics, bk. 6, chap. 2.

<sup>93</sup> Grisar, History of Rome, III, 268. Cf. Max Sabatier, L'Église et le travail manuel, pp. 63-85.

<sup>94</sup> St. Jerome, Against Vigilantius, 2.

It was especially the consideration of the intimate relations of bishops, priests, and deacons 95 with the holy sacrifice of the mass that led the Church to transform into a law what had been, from the beginning of Christianity, an evangelical prompting. The ministers of the spotless Lamb must rise as high as possible above earthly things and sensual inclinations. The law imposing chastity upon these ministers corresponded to the innermost spirit of the Church.

### The Basilicas

Public worship was magnificently developed in the course of the fourth century. A great number of basilicas was built. The comparative prosperity of the East, at the time when everything was collapsing in the West, made it possible to give them vast proportions and to adorn them with splendid decorations. 96 "From Constantine to Justinian the type of the 'civil basilica' was prevalent in the West and in the East for religious edifices." 97 But it would be a mistake to think it was not until the sixth century that Byzantine art began, if by this we mean the substitution of vaulting and cupolas for the timbered roofing of the Roman basilicas. This architectural type existed in Asia Minor in the fourth century. In a letter to Bishop Amphilochius of Iconium, St. Gregory of Nyssa describes with great exactness the details of a church in the form of a cross, built on an octagonal plan and crowned with a cupola.98

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> The practice varied in the case of subdeacons, who were then considered as clerics in minor orders. At Rome they seem to have practiced celibacy at a very early date.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> It is sometimes said that the Christian emperors, especially Theodosius, gave the temples of paganism over to the Christians, to be changed into churches. But the earliest example of this sort occurs in the seventh century. "The transformation of the Pantheon, about the year 612, is the earliest fact of his kind which can be established." Duchesne, *Early History of the Christian Church*, II, 507.

<sup>97</sup> Leclercq, Manuel d'archéologie chrétienne, II, 66.

<sup>98</sup> This letter will be found in Leclerca, op. cit., II, 83 f.

Other innovations characterized the art which then prevailed and which blossomed out in all its magnificence in the Church of Santa Sophia. There were mosaics instead of paintings, a profusion of gilding, polychromatic decoration of statues and monuments. The Christian art of the first three centuries, timid and naive, was that of a trembling, persecuted society; that of the fourth century, from Constantine to Theodosius, was, in growing proportions, that of a society which the State protected, which triumphed with the Empire, which adopted from the State something of the latter's sumptuous splendor. The ornamentation of the Byzantine basilica and the ceremonies displayed in it were somewhat analogous to the large assembly of gorgeously dressed officials which the basileus of Byzantium gathered about his throne on days of great festivity.

# The Liturgy

Under the direction of great bishops like St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, or St. Gregory of Nyssa, the religious character of the liturgy could not suffer from these innovations. It simply took on additional splendor.

The center of the Christian liturgy was always the Eucharistic sacrifice. A conspicuous fact seems to mark the development of the liturgy in the fourth century. Says Dom Cabrol: "If we may anticipate the future proofs and a deeper knowledge of liturgical data, we can already formulate this hypothesis: in the first three centuries a comparative unity in the liturgy, or, if you prefer, an absence of characteristics; beginning with the fourth century, an application of different methods, which will affirm the liturgical diversities." <sup>99</sup> The best known of the liturgical variations is the Syriac, used at

<sup>99</sup> Cabrol, art. "Anaphore," in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie et de liturgie, I, 1912.

Antioch and in the Churches dependent on the patriarchate of that ancient metropolis; the liturgies of Constantinople and of Caesarea as also the Armenian and Persian formularies seem to be connected with that source. In the West, the Roman liturgy prevailed. Yet, in addition to it, the Gallican liturgy, originating perhaps at Milan and passing from there into Gaul, offered many similarities to the liturgy of the East.

A study of the works of St. Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and other writers of the time makes it possible to reconstruct the essential features of the liturgy of the mass. These features have forms so perfectly identical that their study prompts us "to seek their origin much further back. It is not unreasonable for us to see therein a proof in favor of a certain primitive uniformity of the liturgy." <sup>100</sup>

## The Mass

The distinction between the mass of the catechumens and the mass of the faithful is maintained in the fourth century. It would last as long as the institution of the catechumenate. The mass of the catechumens began with the reading of some passages from the Bible and the singing of psalms. In the beginning the selection of these passages was reserved to the judgment of the bishop. Later it was determined by regulations. For example, it was decided that the Acts of the Apostles should be read from Easter to Pentecost, Genesis during Lent, Job and Jeremiah in Passion time. Certain Churches also had the Acts of the martyrs read, and even letters from

<sup>100</sup> Cabrol, loc. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> No trace of catechumens is found in the liturgical books of the eighth century. At that time there were no longer any adult catechumens.

<sup>102</sup> Several passages in St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine presuppose this regulation. (St. Chrysostom, Homily 24, On the Epistle to the Romans; St. Augustine, In Joannem, tr. 26.)

illustrious personages or bishops. Conciliar decisions put an end to this abusive extension. 103

After a greeting to the people and a prayer, the sermon was delivered. It might be a simple exposition of the Scripture passage just read, a connected explanation of a book of the Bible, a discourse on the feast of the day or the life of a saint, or it might concern some extraordinary happening or some duty of the Christian life. The sermons of the most popular preachers were written down by stenographers, who were called tachygraphers. In the East the sermons were rather long and were frequently interrupted by applause. We have evidence of this particularly in the works of St. Chrysostom, who begs his listeners to stop their noisy demonstrations. Preaching was an episcopal function. But the bishops were assisted in this ministry by their priests. In the country churches this function was also confided to deacons. After the sermon, the unbelievers, catechumens, and energumeni were dismissed, 104 and the church doors were closed. The mass of the faithful then began." 105

The mass was always the liturgical drama, having as its basis the Gospel account of the Last Supper, renewed and amplified in a majestic action, in which the celebrant, the

<sup>103</sup> Council of Laodicea, canon 59; Council of Hippo (393), canon 36.

<sup>104</sup> This dismissal was given by the words Ite missa est. Hence the name Mass, given to the sacred ceremony which followed immediately. (Vigourel, A Synthetical Manual of Liturgy, p. 93.) At the close of the mass of the faithful, there was another Ite missa est; this one has been preserved. Vigourel (La Liturgie et la piété chrétienne, p. 114) offers a mystical and broader interpretation of the Ite missa est. He says: "These words are often translated: 'Go, it is the dismissal.' But missa means 'mission.' Might we not see in these words a real mission which the Church gives to those who have come to the holy sacrifice to derive therefrom the light and strength and love of which they stand in need?" As Bossuet remarks, "No one was allowed to leave without the permission of the Church, which dismissed her children only after filling them with veneration for the mysteries and with the graces that accompanied their reception, admonishing them to fulfil their regular duties in the religious spirit called for by their vocation." Bossuet, Explication des prières de la Messe (Lachat ed., XVII, 6).

<sup>105</sup> Hergenröther-Kirsch, Kirchengeschichte, vol. I, bk. 2, part 2, chap. 14.

clergy, the people, the whole Church took part in turn, by dialogue, prayers, and chants of pathetic appeal and majestic greatness.

Aside from the accidental differences between the Western mass and the Eastern "anaphora," <sup>108</sup> the various phases of the liturgical action followed one another in the following order. <sup>107</sup>

As did the mass of the catechumens, the mass of the faithful ordinarily began with a salutation to the people and an invitation to pray: *Dominus vobiscum, Oremus*. At first the prayer was said silently, then it became formulated in a dialogue, said aloud, between the celebrant and the people, or it was recited by a chanter, with interjections of popular acclaim, such as *Amen, Alleluia, Kyrie eleison, Quoniam in acternum misericordia*.

What made up this alternating choral psalmody which, coming from Antioch, was introduced into Constantinople and thence into Milan where St. Ambrose acclimated it? St. Augustine, one of the first hearers of these chants, tells of the impression produced in him by those "accents which gave life to the words sung by a gentle voice, in which the feelings of the soul and their varied shades found each its own note in the inflections of the voice." Augustine's musical emotion was so keen that later he wrote:

"The safer way it seems to me, which I remember to have been often told me of Athanasius bishop of Alexandria, who caused the reader of the psalm to sound it forth with so little warbling of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> The Orientals give the name *anaphora* (elevation, offering) to the middle portion of the mass, from the Preface to the Communion. It corresponds almost exactly to what the Latins call the canon.

<sup>107</sup> Duchesne has made a detailed study of the Roman mass and the Gallican mass (Christian Worship, pp. 153-217); Cabrol has done the same for the Oriental anaphora (Dictionnaire d'archéologie et de liturgie, I, 1898-1918). Cagin undertakes to show the fundamental unity of all these liturgies. (Paléogr. musicale, vol. V.) In the summary we give here, we have made use of these various works.

the voice, as that it was nearer to speaking than to singing," <sup>108</sup> And in another place he says: "At hearing of those airs which thy words breathe soul into, whenas they are sung with a well tuned and well governed voice, I do, I confess, receive a little contentment." <sup>109</sup>

And now all the people start moving for the offertory. Slowly, religiously, each one of the faithful carries to the altar some bread and wine for the sacrifice, some oil for the lights, some incense, or even some wheat freshly harvested. At the end of the fourth century, the oblation was still made in silence. But in the time of St. Augustine, a chant, called the Offertorium, was introduced at Carthage during the oblation, to occupy the faithful during that exercise. A chanter intoned a few verses of a psalm, to which the people responded by repeating a few words of the same psalm in the form of a refrain. When the offertory was finished, the deacon gave a signal to stop the singing. In the East, the carrying of the offerings and placing them on the altar was done by a sort of procession, more solemnly than in the West. It was our Offertory.

After the deacon had separated the bread and wine intended for the sacrifice from the offerings reserved for the poor, another invitation to pray was addressed to the people: *Orate*, fratres, said the priest.

As in the mass of the catechumens, the prayer was at first said in silence, as in the case of our *Secreta* at present. But soon it changed into a dialogue said aloud: "The Lord be with

<sup>108&</sup>quot;Ut pronuntianti vicinior esset quam canenti." St. Augustine, Confessions, bk. 10, chap. 33.

<sup>109</sup> St. Augustine, Retractions, bk. 2, chap. 11. Of what did this chant consist? We find no useful information on this point in the treatise De musica which St. Augustine published in 398. The treatise was never completed. The part that was written treats merely of the rhythm and the lyric meters. For early Christian music and song, see Gatard, La Musique grégorienne; art. "Chant romain et grégorien, in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie et de liturgie; Gastoué, Les Origines du chant romain.

you.—And with your spirit.—Let your hearts be raised up.—We have raised them up to the Lord.—Let us thank the Lord our God.—It is right and just."

Then, in a particularly solemn tone, the celebrant began a prayer, called Eucharistic prayer or thanksgiving. Its form was almost invariable in the East, but in the West was adapted to the various feasts. The basis of it was everywhere the same. The prayer always began as follows: "It is truly worthy and just, right and profitable unto salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O holy Lord." Such is the origin of our Preface. God was thanked for His works, for the creation, for the redemption of man after his sin, and above all for the institution of the sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

An acclaim, by the people, to the thrice holy God—our present *Sanctus*—came next, forming, in all the liturgies of East and West without exception, the connection between the prayers we have just spoken of and the liturgical act of consecration.

This essential part of the holy sacrifice was made up of words and manual actions. The words were the simple account of the Last Supper. In the Preface the celebrant could improvise, develop the traditional theme, and even add his own intentions. But in this part of the mass he no longer exercises that same freedom. First he prays the Lord to look favorably upon the oblation and to have the power of His Holy Spirit descend upon it,<sup>110</sup> to make it the body and blood of Christ. He next recites, according to the formula used in his rite, the account of the Last Supper, at which the Savior gave Him-

<sup>110</sup> Some consider this the Roman *epiklesis*, thus placing it before the consecration. The term *epiklesis* may be applied also to a prayer which, in the Roman rite, comes after the consecration, asking God that the sacrifice may bear fruit in the souls of the faithful. See Salaville, art. "Epiclèse," in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 194 ff. Cf. De Puniet, Le Canon de la messe d'après quelques travaux récents, in the Van Onzen Tijd (vol. III, 1910), a Dutch review.

self to His disciples. This was an efficacious account which, by the repetition of the Savior's words, brought down, under the species of bread and wine, the body and blood, the soul and divinity of the immolated Christ. The Savior, present on the altar, was then adored by the Lord's Prayer. The manual actions usually included the elevation of the Host, the breaking of it, the mingling of the body and blood, and a final blessing. In the Eastern Churches, during this part of the mass, the sacred Species were veiled.

The liturgies of the East added to these ceremonies of the consecration a prayer to the Holy Ghost, which they called *epiklesis* and which some of those liturgies regarded as essential.<sup>111</sup> The *epiklesis* was almost completely absent in the Roman Church. This fact led the Greek Church, after its schism, to accuse the Roman Church of not consecrating validly.

After the ceremony of the consecration, in the East the altar curtains were drawn back and all present solemnly adored the Holy Eucharist. Then began the communion. The faithful still received communion under both species. Usually a priest gave the consecrated Host; a deacon, the precious Blood. While receiving the sacred Species the communicant usually stood up, inclining his head. The celebrant said: "Behold the body of Christ," "Behold the blood of Christ"; and the communicant responded; "Amen." During the distribution of the Eucharist, suitable verses of the Psalms were sung by the people. One of the most usual was the following verse from Psalm 33: "Taste, and see that the Lord is sweet."

After a prayer of thanksgiving and the blessing given by the celebrant, the deacon dismissed the people, saying, in the East: "Go in peace"; in the West: "Go, it is time to leave (*Ite, missa est*)."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> On the Epiklesis in the East, see the Echos d'Orient, XI, 101-112; XII, 129-136, 222-227; XIII, 132-135; XIV, 10-16; XVI, 28-31.

Such was the solemn mass, the only one celebrated at the beginning of Christianity. But, in the precise testimony of St. Ambrose, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Paulinus of Nola, and other Fathers, we have proof that during the fourth century priests and bishops also celebrated private (low) masses. These masses were ordinarily said in private chapels; the laity did not receive communion at them. The ancient agapes, kept up on the feasts of martyrs in the form of funeral repasts, were forbidden on account of the abuses that had arisen in connection with them. After the fourth century we find no evidence of them except at Rome and in Gaul; even there they were very rare.

The faithful received communion usually whenever they attended solemn mass. The practice of taking the sacred Species home or on a journey became very exceptional. It was seldom that communion was brought to the sick or to solitaries, and, in such case, they received communion only under the species of bread, since the Savior was considered entirely present under each species.

# Ceremonies of Baptism

The changes introduced into the rites of baptism after the peace of the Church affected particularly the ceremonial of the catechumenate. The practice of reserving solemn baptisms to the two feasts of Easter and Pentecost apparently goes back to the fourth century.<sup>114</sup> However, Pope Siricius, when appointing those two solemnities, makes exception for children in danger of death and for the dying in general, who could be baptized at any time.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Paulinus, Vita Ambrosii; St. Gregory Nazianzen, Orations, XVIII, 29, 38; Uranius, Epistola de obitu S. Paulini.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Council of Gangra, canon II; Council of Laodicea, canon 28; Council of Hippo (393), canon 29.

<sup>114</sup> Ambrosiaster, Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 4.

<sup>115</sup> St. Siricius, Epistola ad Himerium, chap. 2. Cf. Mansi, III, 1137.

We are well informed about the ceremonies of baptism in the fourth century by three important documents: the *Cate-cheses* of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and the *Peregrinatio Silviae*.

"With St. Cyril as our guide, we can follow the whole series of preparatory rites and those of the initiation itself. His catecheses are divided into two groups, one dealing with the ceremonies which precede, the other with those which follow, the initiation. The first, which is a kind of preliminary discourse, entitled pro-Catechesis, describes the catechumens as presenting themselves at the beginning of Lent to be enrolled as candidates for baptism. The Pilgrimage of Etheria (Silvia) gives a similar account of this preparatory stage. The names having been inscribed, a day was appointed on which the bishop, assisted by his priests and all the other clergy, proceeded to make a general scrutiny. The candidates, accompanied by their relatives, appeared before him one by one. The bishop made inquiries of the neighbors of each catechumen as to his conduct; if the candidate were a stranger, he had to show commendatory letters. In the case of his not being considered worthy to present himself for baptism, he was made to wait until a subsequent occasion. If the information given was satisfactory, he was accepted, and was thenceforth placed among the number of the competents (competentes, φωτιζόμενοι).

"During the whole of Lent the competents were summoned every morning to church, to be exorcised and to hear a sermon from the bishop or from some one appointed by him. The exorcisms were performed by the inferior clergy, and were accompanied by insufflation. Cyril seems to say that while the words of conjuration were being pronounced, the candidates had their faces covered.

"At the end of a stated time the *Traditio symboli*, or delivery of the Creed, took place. As it was the universal custom for the Creed to be taught by word of mouth, and not learned from a written copy, Cyril has not inserted the text of it in his *Catecheses*. After the *Traditio*, the teaching dealt with the articles of the Creed, and was continued till the beginning of Holy Week. It was then that

the *Redditio*, or recital of the Creed, took place, each candidate presenting himself before the bishop and reciting the Belief, which he had learned by heart. The catecheses during Lent were devoted to instruction in the doctrines of the Eucharist and baptism; and these also formed the theme of the teaching which the neophytes received during Easter Week.

"At Jerusalem the commemoration of the Passion was of too great an importance, and engaged too much time, to permit of the candidate for baptism receiving instruction during Holy Week, but they presented themselves on the night of Easter Eve for the ceremonies of initiation. They were received in the vestibule of the baptistery, and the service began by the renunciation of the devil. The candidate turned to the west, the region of darkness, and extending his hand, pronounced the formulary of rejection, addressing himself to the evil one, as if he were present: 'I renounce thee, Satan, thy works, thy pomps, and all thy worship.' He then turned to the east, the region of light, and recited the Creed for the second time. This ceremony, with its two corresponding parts, constituted what is called in the Greek, the ἀπόταξις (apotaxis) and the σύνταξις (suntaxis).

"The candidate then put off his garments and entered the baptistery. He was immediately anointed, from head to foot, with exorcised oil. In the case of the women, this anointing was performed by deaconesses.

"After this anointing, the neophyte entered the font, which had been previously blessed by the bishop. He once more confessed his faith, replying to the threefold questioning of the officiating minister, and was then plunged three times in the consecrated water." <sup>116</sup>

## Confirmation

Scarcely had the newly baptized emerged from the piscina, when he received the sacrament of confirmation. In imitation of Christ who, after His baptism in the Jordan, received the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> Duchesne, Christian Worship, pp. 327 ff. Cf. Corblet, Histoire du sacrament de baptême.

Holy Ghost under the form of a dove, the neophyte, upon leaving the baptismal font, was anointed with chrism, perfumed oil, symbolizing and efficaciously producing the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the confirmed person. He then put on new clothes of white color and, assisted by his godparents, presented himself before the bishop, who, according to the *Pilgrimage of Silvia*, imposed hands on him and spoke a prayer over him. The pontiff next made the sign of the cross on the forehead of each neophyte, saying: *In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti: Pax tibi.* "By this new rite," says St. Cyril, "the Holy Ghost marks the soul with a heavenly seal which makes the devils tremble; He arms it for the battle; He gives it strength; and He is ready henceforth to watch over the Christian as over His own soldier." 119

### The Sacrament of Penance

The solemn reconciliation of sinners by the sacrament of penance was still, in the fourth century, a function reserved to the bishop, as were solemn baptism on Holy Saturday and the consecration of chrism on Holy Thursday. St. Jerome says this in connection with the case of Fabiola; and the Council of Carthage (418), in its third canon, forbids simple priests to consecrate the chrism as also to reconcile anyone solemnly. Furthermore a distinction must be made in the penitential procedure, according as there is question of very grave sins (graviora) or lesser sins (leviora). In the case of all these sins the Church granted reconciliation after a variable penance. 121

<sup>117</sup> St. Cyril, Catechetical Lectures, XXI, 35-37.

<sup>118</sup> Peregrinatio Silviae, no. 133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> St. Cyril, op. cit., XXI, 35-37.

<sup>120</sup> Batiffol, Études d'histoire et de théologie positive, I, 164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> In 385 Pope Siricius imposed a perpetual penance upon apostates. This is the only known instance of perpetual penance.

For very grievous faults, such as idolatry, homicide, and fornication, as a rule a penance was imposed, called plenary penance. This was the penance imposed on Fabiola after her fall. St. Jerome describes it as follows:

"As a public confession of her sin, she determined to wear sack-cloth. In sight of all Rome, before Easter she took her place among the penitents outside the Lateran Basilica. With disheveled hair, with her head, face, and hands smeared with ashes, with tears flowing from her eyes, she bowed her head beneath the discipline of the Church in the presence of the Pope, the bishops, and the entire people. . . . She disclosed her wounds to everybody. It was not without tears that Rome looked at the signs of her grief marked upon her pale body so thin from fasting. She appeared with rent garments and bare head. She did not enter the church of the Lord, but stayed without the camp, separated from the others, like Moses' sister Mary, waiting until the priest who set her without should bid her return" 122

This solemn penance, ordained and presided over by the bishop, for the expiation of great sins, constituted, at the end of the fourth century, a Holy Thursday ceremony, as solemn baptism was a Holy Saturday ceremony. But, just as along with solemn baptism there existed private baptism, so too, besides the public penance, a private penance was possible. It was intended for less grievous sins. It was administered by priests specially delegated for the purpose with the title of "priests penitentiary."

The historian Socrates relates that "during the persecution under Decius the bishops added to the ecclesiastical canon a presbyter of penitence in order that those who had sinned after baptism might confess their sins in the presence of the presbyter thus appointed." <sup>123</sup> This priest was chosen from

<sup>122</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 73, no. 2.

<sup>123</sup> Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, V, 19.

those who excelled in their morals, their discretion, and their wisdom. Says Sozomen: "It was his office to indicate the kind of penance adapted to each sin and then, when satisfaction had been made, to pronounce absolution." <sup>124</sup>

But in 396, after the scandal produced by the solemn confession of a woman in high station, who thought it her duty to reveal to the public the grievous sin of a deacon, her accomplice, the patriarch of Constantinople, Nectarius, suppressed the office of priest penitentiary in his diocese. This event influenced the general reorganization of the penitential discipline. Public confession was more and more relinquished. In the absence of the priest penitentiary, the faithful, for the absolution of their sins, turned to any priest they chose, from whom they received their penance. Yet the priests penitentiary continued in Italy and several other parts of the West, where the ancient rules of penance were preserved, while they were relaxed in the East.

124 Sozomen, VII, 16. Does the word ἀπολύειν, which Sozomen uses, mean that this priest absolves the penitent straightway, or that he postpones the absolution until the penance is performed, or that he refers the matter to the bishop, or that he leaves it to God to absolve? All these opinions have been held. It seems to us that the most likely is the view which, as held by Vacandard and Harent, "regards the absolution of the priest confessor as having the quality of really forgiving the sin." (Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 161.) But it is to be noted that "the Fathers of the first centuries seemed to regard penance in the ensemble of the ceremonies that composed it, leaving to future theorists the task of assigning to each element its particular power." (Ibid.) Hence the Fathers' vague expressions, some of which do not seem quite in agreement with our present theory, but none of which expressly contradicts it. See Vacandard, Le Pouvoir des clés et la confession sacramentelle, in the Revue du clergé français, 1898 and 1899; Batiffol, Étude d'histoire et de théologie positive, I, 145-195; Bondinhon, Sur l'histoire de la pénitence, in the Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse, II, 306 ff., 496 ff.; Harent, La Confession, in the Études, LXXX (1899), 577 ff.; Funck, Bussdisciplin, in Welzer and Welte's Kirchenlexikon. On the question of the reconciliation of heretics, see Galtier, Absolution ou confirmation? La réconciliation des hérétiques, in the Recherches de science religieuse, May-June, 1914, pp. 201-235.

<sup>125</sup> Batisfol, Les Prêtres pénitenciers romains au V° Siècle, in the Compte rendu du 3° congrès scientifique des catholiques, Brussels, 1895, Sciences religieuses, pp. 277–290.

#### Extreme Unction

The evidence we have cited in relating the history of the first three centuries, and numerous patristic testimonies that may be found in special works, <sup>126</sup> sufficiently explain the disciplinary development of the administration of the sacrament of penance. No Protestant now holds that confession was introduced in the thirteenth century by Pope Innocent III. But some still claim that the sacrament of extreme unction dates only from the Middle Ages. <sup>127</sup> They cannot deny that the first Christians, for the solace of their diseases, made use of anointing with blessed oil. Evidences in favor of this practice are abundant both in the East and in the West. <sup>128</sup> And it is likely that anointing with blessed oil was practiced from those early times, outside the sacramental rite, as an exercise of purely personal and private devotion.

But the existence of the sacramental rite, strictly so called, performed by the priest and, as its effect producing grace, is attested by evidence that is beyond dispute. The so-called *Canons of St. Hippolytus*, which, according to the view of most scholars, are previous to the fourth century, <sup>129</sup> speak of a liturgical ceremony performed by the bishop upon the sick

<sup>126</sup> Cambier, De divina institutione confessionis, pp. 96-333. Recent works on the penitential discipline are inclining scholars to discard the notion of two parallel penitential institutions, one public, the other secret, functioning concurrently, at the choice of those concerned. "There was but one Christian penance, but it moved in complex circumstances and did not consist exclusively of what we call public penance. This latter is merely the most apparent and most rigid part, consequently the better known part of what was a single thing." This is the conclusion reached by D'Alès, L'Édit de Calliste, appendix 3 on the Élément privé dans l'ancienne pénitence, p. 454. Cf. Galtier, Saint Jean Chrysostome et la confession, in the Recherches de science religieuse, I, 209 ff., 313 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> V. G., Puller, The Anointing of the Sick in Scripture and Tradition.

<sup>128</sup> Ruch, art. "Extrème-Onction," in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 1942 f. 129 Cabrol, Introduction aux études liturgiques, pp. 11 f.; Duchesne, Christian Worship, p. 534.

(canons 199, 200). <sup>130</sup> The *Apostolic Constitutions*, which give the practice of the fourth century, speak of a prayer which the bishop said over water and oil to accord to these elements "a power to restore health, to banish demons, and to disperse all snares." <sup>131</sup> The Anaphora of Serapion and the Testament of the Lord <sup>132</sup> give the text of this prayer, by which the bishop asks God to grant "by this oil good grace and remission of sins."

These testimonies seem conclusive. In a period when as yet the language did not clearly express the distinction between the sacraments with secondary ceremonies and the practices of private devotion, the vagueness of other patristic texts is easily explained. Notwithstanding this vagueness, the anointing of the sick for the remission of sins appears as a clearly defined rite in the fourth century. As St. Chrysostom, <sup>183</sup> following Origen, speaks of this rite in connection with the familiar text of St. James about the anointing of the sick there is no doubt but that he is there considering the sacrament of extreme unction, instituted by Jesus Christ. <sup>184</sup>

## Sacrament of Matrimony

The liturgy of matrimony surrounded this sacrament with gracious and expressive ceremonies. Says Dom Cabrol: "In this the Church showed a delicate and judicious eclecticism. Some of the ceremonies she adopted were current among the Gentiles; she excluded only such of them as had a gross and impure character. She kept the veil, the ring, even the crown.

<sup>130</sup> For the text of these canons, see Duchesne, op. cit., 525 ff.

<sup>131</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, VIII, 29.

<sup>132</sup> Testamentum Domini (Rahmani ed.), I, 48 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> St. Chrysostom, *Priesthood*, III, 6. Cf. Pesch, *Praelectiones dogmaticae*, VII, 256 f.

<sup>134</sup> For further development of this subject, see Ruch, art. "Extrème-Onction," in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, V, 1931–1952. To deny the probative value of the liturgical texts, Puller has to gratuitously suppose their interpolation.

And for the blessing of these different articles, she had prayers expressive of their symbolic character." <sup>135</sup> The ring was blessed with these words: "Bless, O Lord, this ring, that she who wears it in marriage may keep herself in Thy peace and may grow old in Thy love." Over the crown the priest said this prayer: "May this handmaid of God, N., be crowned for the servant of God, N. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The long prayer which the priest recites today for the bride and groom after the *Pater Noster* goes back to the first centuries. <sup>136</sup> The marriage ceremony concluded with a liturgical litany sung alternately by the deacon and the choir.

"Let us pray to the Lord in peace," said the deacon.

"Lord, have mercy," responded the choir.

"Let us pray to the Lord for the peace of this bride and groom, and for their salvation."

"Lord, have mercy."

"Let us pray for the peace of the whole world; let us pray for the prosperity of the Churches of God; let us pray for the union of all."

"Lord, have mercy."

## Liturgical Development

The peace, salvation, and union of all in the charity of Christ are the dominant notes that resound through the whole Catholic liturgy. But the fourth century marks a very important period in the development of the liturgical life. Three chief innovations are to be traced to that period: I. the distinction between two sorts of liturgy, one for the faithful in general, the other for the ascetics and virgins; 2. for

<sup>135</sup> Cabrol, Le Livre de la prière antique, pp. 446 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> It is found in the earliest liturgical books given by Martène, Gerbert, and others.

this latter group, the organization of a daily psalmody service; 3. a profound change in ecclesiastical psalmody.

#### The Canonical Hours

When we read the ascetical sermons of the Fathers of this period, two facts stand out conspicuously. First, the preachers complain that many of the faithful are neglecting the religious exercises, even those celebrated on Sunday with special solemnity. Secondly, they note with joy the formation of groups of more zealous people who, without leaving the world, promise by a sort of vow to remain chaste all their life, to fast all week long, and to pray every day.

"These consisted of men and women alike, living in the world, and without severing themselves from the ties and obligations of ordinary life, yet binding themselves by private vows or public profession to live in chastity all their life, to fast all the week, and to spend their days in prayer. They were called ascetics and virgins. They formed, as it were, a confraternity without a hierarchy and without organization, a connecting link between clergy and laity. While not as yet cenobites, they were already regulars." <sup>137</sup>

Their promises about chastity and fasting did not necessarily call for special organization. But the daily prayer to which they bound themselves and which, in the spirit of the Church, tended to become a collective prayer and did soon become so, required regulations. The basis for such rules was easily found. The piety of Christians had long since attached religious memories to certain hours of the day. The third hour (nine o'clock in the morning) was that of the Savior's condemnation; the sixth (noon), that of His crucifixion; and the ninth (three o'clock in the afternoon), the hour of His death. When the public clocks indicated these hours, fervent

<sup>137</sup> Batiffol, History of the Roman Breviary, p. 11.

Christians recollected themselves and prayed.<sup>138</sup> From this pious practice the ascetics made a rule for themselves. It was the origin of their daily offices: tierce, sext, and none. They took their night offices (vespers and lauds) from the ancient custom of vigils. On the eve of Sundays, of the martyrs' anniversaries, and of station days, the Christians, meeting either in the churches or in the cemeteries where the martyrs' bodies rested, recited public prayers, with the clergy presiding. These prayers were called vespers, nocturns, and lauds, and these designations became fixed and approved. The corresponding offices were celebrated by the ascetics, not merely on Sundays and feast days, but every day. Such was the origin of what later came to be called the canonical hours.<sup>139</sup>

A Spanish pilgrim visiting Jerusalem about 385 has left us a detailed description of the daily service celebrated in the great church of that city, the Anastasis.<sup>140</sup>

This is how she describes the celebration of the daily vigil, *i. e.*, of matins and lauds.

"Every day before cockcrow all the doors of the Anastasis are opened, and all the monks and virgins, as they call them here, go thither, and not they alone, but lay people also, both men and women, who desire to begin their vigil early. And from that hour to daybreak hymns are said and psalms are sung responsively, and antiphons in like manner; and prayer is made after each of the hymns. For priests, deacons, and monks in twos or threes take it in turn every day to say prayers after each of the hymns or antiphons. But when day breaks they begin to say the Matin hymns. Thereupon the bishop arrives with the clergy, and immediately enters into the cave, and from within the rails he first says a prayer for all, men-

<sup>138</sup> Tertullian, De jejunio, 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> For more detailed treatment of these beginnings, see Batiffol, op. cit., and Baümer, *Histoire du breviarie* (French trans.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> We refer to the author of the *Peregrinatio Silviae*, who, according to the conclusions of Dom Férotin, was not St. Silvia of Aquitania, but a Spanish virgin, named Etheria.

tioning the names of those whom he wishes to commemorate; he then blesses the catechumens, afterwards he says a prayer and blesses the faithful. And when the bishop comes out from within the rails, every one approaches his hand, and he blesses them one by one as he goes out, and the dismissal takes places by daylight." 141

The following is her account of the offices of sext and none.

"At the sixth hour all go again to the Anastasis, and psalms and antiphons are said while the bishop is being summoned; then he comes as before, not taking his seat, but he enters at once within the rails in the Anastasis, that is in the cave, just as in the early morning, and as then he again first says a prayer, then he blesses the faithful, and as he comes out from within the rails every one approaches his hand. And the same is done at the ninth hour as at the sixth." 142

In the description of vespers we also note the singing of psalms by all the faithful, and the prayer said by the bishop alone. But between the psalms and the prayer a short litany is inserted. It is said by a deacon, and the responses are made by the children.

# Psalmody

In this description of the liturgical day, the devout pilgrim frequently speaks of psalm singing. Ecclesiastical psalmody had undergone a notable transformation since the peace of the Church.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> The liturgical part of the *Peregrinatio Silviae* is quoted by Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, pp. 492 ff., 547 ff.

<sup>142</sup> Ibidem, p. 548. The Peregrinatio Silviae makes no mention of Terce. But from other sources we know that the prayers of Terce were said before the celebration of mass. As for Prime, Cassian assigns it a rather prosaic origin. He says that an office was placed at sunrise to stimulate the morning rising of certain monks who used to awake only at the hour of Terce. (Cassian, Collationes, III, 4.) The Compline prayers were also monastic, devised to close the day with psalmody, since Vespers took place before the evening meal. Thus were formed all the parts of the divine office.

"The description of it is given by St. Augustine when speaking of St. Athanasius: 'He caused the reader to use such slight inflections of the voice, that he seemed to say the psalms rather than to sing them'; such was the most ancient method. But if a chant of this kind sufficed to fix the attention of a congregation of limited numbers, closely packed together, and to fill a small church, such could not be the case when there was a great crowd of people in a vast basilica. In congregations which St. Ambrose compares to a tossing and murmuring sea, there was need for a chant of greater power—powerful itself as the sound of mighty waters. There is no more solo singing: the whole congregation takes part in the chanting, being arranged in two choirs.

"More than this, the antiphonal chant manifests itself all at once as a melody of varied and pathetic character. The psalm-chant, having begun by being a simple recitative, assumed the form of an elaborate piece of music. When St. John Chrysostom became bishop of Constantinople, he introduced music into his church, giving the direction of the choirs into the hands of a eunuch of the Empress' household, holding some such position as the chief musician of the court. . . The primitive simplicity of psalmody was no longer suited to the pomp of Christian worship in its triumph. Christian art of every sort was budding forth: architecture, painting, ceremonial. For these new multitudes of the faithful there was needed the attraction and the prestige of a powerful and ornate choral music, on a level with the eloquence of a St. John Chrysostom or a St. Ambrose." 143

# The Liturgical Week

Like the order of the liturgical day, that of the liturgical week became more precisely fixed in the fourth century. *The Pilgrimage of Silvia* tells us that, throughout the year, Wednesday and Saturday were fast days, even for catechumens, at least if the feast of a martyr did not fall on one of those

<sup>143</sup> Batisfol, History of the Roman Breviary, pp. 19-23.

days. 144 The Testament of the Lord, which belongs to this same period, informs us that Sunday rest was then everywhere definitely substituted for that of the Sabbath. And from other sources we learn that the Sunday rest had been sanctioned, since the days of Constantine, by several official decisions. By virtue of several laws enacted by Constantine, Theodosius, and the two Valentinians, on Sunday all military service was suspended,145 all court trials and business ceased, even in case of suits for the collection of public debts, 146 and all theatrical performances were forbidden. 147 In cities the work of laborers was obliged to stop, but the same prohibition did not yet apply to laborers in the fields. The wretchedness and suffering consequent upon the wars and various other calamities seemed to justify this exception.<sup>148</sup> Moreover on Sunday it was lawful to perform whatever referred to the emancipation of slaves. For all, even those who did not share the Christian faith, the Lord's Day was a day of rest, recollection, and joy.

For Christians it became more and more the center of the week, the liturgical day preëminently. On Sunday the people not merely attended mass, but sang the psalms of the vigil with great solemnity. This office paralleled the office sung by the ascetics. The *Pilgrimage of Silvia* gives us a vivid description of this Sunday Office. "On the seventh day," she says,

"that is on the Lord's Day, the whole multitude assembles before cockcrow in as great numbers as the place can hold, as at Easter, in the basilica which is near the Anastasis, but outside the doors, where lights are hanging for the purpose. And for fear that they should not be there at cockcrow they come beforehand and sit down there.

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144 Duchesne, op. cit., pp. 501, 555
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<sup>145</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, IV, 18, 19.

<sup>146</sup> Theodosian Code, VIII, VIII, 1-3; XI, VII, 10-13.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., XV, v, 2.

<sup>148</sup> This right of the peasants to labor every day continued until the ninth century. Cf. Pargoire, art. "Argia," in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne, I, 2810.

Hymns as well as antiphons are said, and prayers are made between the several hymns and antiphons, for at the vigils there are always both priests and deacons ready there for the assembling of the multitude, the custom being that the holy places are not opened before cockcrow. Now as soon as the first cock has crowed, the bishop arrives and enters the cave at the Anastasis; all the doors are opened and the whole multitude enters the Anastasis, where countless lights are already burning."

"This office," says Cabrol, "seems not to correspond to any of the liturgical parts now in use." 149 Duchesne considers it a vestige of the gathering which, in the first centuries took place on Sunday nights and on station days. This office, arranged with a mass, may have been subsequently combined with that of matins. Whether or not we accept this conjecture, we know that, after the people had entered the church, a priest, a deacon, and a simple cleric each in turn recited a psalm, followed by a prayer. The censers were then lighted and the basilica was filled with their fragrance. The bishop was handed the Book of Gospels and from it read the account of the Savior's resurrection. After the singing of a final psalm and the reciting of a final prayer, the bishop withdrew. The ascetics alone remained in the basilica and sang psalms until daybreak. Some well-disposed members of the laity, men and women, joined with them.

### The Liturgical Year

At the close of the fourth century, we see the liturgical year enriched with a large number of new feasts, all grouped in the Christmas cycle and the Easter cycle.<sup>150</sup> In that period, the feast of our Lord's nativity, which had been celebrated in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> Cabrol, Étude sur la Peregrinatio Silviae, p. 51. The passage is quoted in Duchesne, op. cit., p. 543.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. H. Kellner, L'Année ecclésiastique (French trans.).

the East on January 6,<sup>151</sup> and in the West on December 25, came to be solemnized everywhere on the latter date. The feast of January 6, keeping the name of Epiphany (Manifestation), recalled the adoration by the Magi, our Lord's baptism, and His first miracle at the marriage feast of Cana. The feasts of St. Stephen (first martyr), St. John the Apostle, the Holy Innocents, and the Circumcision centered about the great solemnity of Christmas.

On Epiphany the clergy determined and announced to the people the date of the movable feast of Easter. This latter feast was preceded by a period of fasting, which varied in different places. In general the purpose was to imitate the Savior's forty days' fast. But the Eastern Christians, who did not fast on Sundays or Saturdays, prolonged this period for eight weeks so as to complete the number of forty days. The liturgy of Lent at first was inspired by the single idea of penance. In the fourth century it was also dominated by the idea of preparation for baptism, which was conferred solemnly on Holy Saturday, and by the idea of preparation for the public reconciliation of sinners, which took place on Holy Thursday. The same statement of the public reconciliation of sinners, which took place on Holy Thursday.

Our present liturgy preserves remarkable traces of this ancient idea. Thus, all the prayers of Laetare Sunday—antiphons, responses, and lessons—have been chosen to celebrate the joy of the catechumen called by baptism to light and holiness; and the rite which today takes place for all the faithful on Ash Wednesday is merely a part of the ceremony in which, at the beginning of Lent, the public penitents took part, with

<sup>151</sup> Vailhé, Introduction de la fète de Noël à Jérusalem, in the Échos d'Orient, VIII (1905), 212-218.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>152</sup> Peregrinatio Silviae, in Duchesne, op. cit., pp. 499, 554.

<sup>153</sup> On the origin of Lent, see Salaville in the *Echos d'Orient*, XIII (1910), pp. 65-72; Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, I, 549 note; Vacandard, art. "Carême," in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, II, 1728.

ashes sprinkled on their head as a sign of humiliation and mourning.

The week before Easter (Holy Week or the Great Week) was a time of stricter penance. The offices were longer and more solemn, and contained lessons suited to the reconciliation of those great days.

The Easter liturgy was resplendent with the memory of Christ's resurrection and the joy of the newly baptized who, upon coming out of the baptismal font, dressed in white, <sup>154</sup> and went in procession from the baptistery to the basilica amid the acclamations of the people. The next days, that is, until Saturday *in albis*, when the baptized wore their white garments for the last time, and even the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost, were considered as a continual feast.

Thus the memory of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection, in combination with the various stages of Christian life (baptism, penance, and reconciliation) celebrated by singing, spectacles, and supplications, penetrated the souls of Christian peoples and rescued them from the unwholesome influences which so many centuries of idolatry had exerted upon pagan society. The pious pilgrim of Jerusalem, whose valuable testimony we have already recorded, relates that, at the most impressive moments of the offices, when the ceremonies and singing recalled, for example, the death or resurrection of Christ, sobs burst forth and mingled with the liturgy with such emotion that "there is none who does not lament more than can be conceived." <sup>155</sup>

The cult of the martyrs, of the saints in general, and especially of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, received a

<sup>184</sup> A reminder of the newly baptized who laid aside their white garment on Saturday in albis, is found in the present-day response of Saturday in the octave of Easter: "Isti sunt agni novelli, qui annuntiaverunt, alleluia: modo venerunt ad fontes, repleti sunt claritate, alleluia, alleluia."

<sup>155</sup> Peregrinatio Silviae, in Duchesne, op. cit., p. 566.

considerable development in the fourth century. In reply to the objections of pagans, Manichaeans, and other heretics, who attacked these devotions, the Church Fathers determined to show the difference which the Church held between the cult of *latria*, or adoration due to God alone, and the cult of *dulia*, or the homage due to those who, after being our models in this life, have become our protectors in heaven. St. Ambrose, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Augustine often preached on this subject. In the time of Constantine, the Church of Constantinople gloried in the possession of the relics of St. Andrew, St. Luke, and St. Timothy. Abuses occurred even with regard to relics, so that Theodosius had to forbid trafficking in them.

At the same time the cult of the Blessed Virgin kept its place above that of all the saints and even above that of the angels. It grew as the general devotion took on new developments in the liturgy. Two causes in particular contributed to this magnificence of devotion to Mary. There was, first, the increase in the number of communities of virgins, who naturally placed themselves under the patronage of the virgin Mother of Christ. Then there was the theological work of the Fathers, which more precisely determined the Blessed Virgin's part in the work of Redemption. 160

#### The Monastic Life

The places of retreat, whence the ascetical and liturgical life derived its particular growth and vigor, were the monas-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> St. Ambrose, *De viduis*, chap. 9; St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations*, 24; St. Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, XX, 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> Theodore, H. E., II, 61 f.

<sup>158</sup> Theodosian Code, IX, xvI, v, 2; xvII, I.

<sup>159</sup> Lehner, Die Marienwerehrung in den ersten Jahrhunderten.

<sup>160</sup> St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures, XII, 15, 29; St. Chrysostom, Homilia in santum Pascha, on Psalm 44, no. 7; St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poems, I, 2.

teries. There, too, it cannot be denied, the strangest abuses were encountered.

The number of monks had greatly increased in the East since St. Pachomius. In 372, Egypt alone counted almost a hundred thousand of them. And now they were to be seen, not only in the deserts, but in the very cities, where they mingled with the people in a way that was at times indiscreet. Two men there were who tried to lead them back to the primitive austerity of their rules: Eustathius of Sebaste and St. Basil. No contemporary raised the least question as to the incorruptible virtue of Eustathius, bishop of Sebaste, and the earnestness of his zeal in combating abuses. These qualities gave him great influence which he used to gather about him disciples whom he trained in strict asceticism. Clothed in tatters, like beggars, they fled from whatever gratifies sensuality, and embraced the oddest practices of mortification. Unfortunately the very excess of these practices and Eustathius' relations with the Arian party endangered the success of this reform, which was denounced by the Council of Gangra in 340.161 More fruitful was St. Basil's reform. As we have already seen, 162 all he required of his monks was the curtailment of superfluities in matters of dress, food, and dwelling, constant vigilance, obedience to even the smallest prescriptions of their rule, and especially a perfect renunciation of their own will. The rule of St. Basil became for the East what the rule of St. Benedict later became for the West.

Basilian monks wore a sleeveless linen tunic, called a *colobium*, and a goat-skin cloak, called *melotes* or *pera*.<sup>163</sup> They practiced absolute poverty, working with their hands, shunning idleness as the most dread of vices, meditating on the

<sup>161</sup> Hefele, II, 326 ff.

<sup>162</sup> See supra, p. 247.

<sup>163</sup> Cassian, De institutis cenobiorum, I, 5; Rufinus, Lives of the Fathers, chap. 3; St. Jerome, Introductio ad regulas Pacomii. 4.

words of Scripture, and devoting themselves to contemplation. The monks who adopted this rule practiced open hospitality, welcomed pilgrims, gave lodging to poor people ruined by war or famine, and taught them labor by example. The fame of their holiness attracted great personages to them for advice. The secular clergy felt the happy influence of their rugged virtues. Their hours of prayer were exactly regulated. To them the Church owes the introduction of the prayers of prime and compline. And by them the cycle of the office would acquire its perfect harmony.

In 340 St. Athanasius, who was a refugee in Rome, there made known the cenobitical life as practiced by St. Antony. St. Eusebius of Vercelli, St. Ambrose, and St. Jerome made the first attempts to cultivate it. St. Martin of Tours was its propagator in Gaul, and St. Augustine, at the beginning of the fifth century, introduced it in Africa. The institution of the ascetics and the virgins had already prepared people for the practice of the monastic rule. In the fifth and sixth centuries they developed in the West with great brilliancy, but not without struggles. Already, toward the close of the fourth century, a Roman monk, Jovinianus, a Spanish priest, Vigilantius, a Roman layman, Helvidius, and a bishop of Sardica, Bonosus, had bitterly criticized the practices of the monastic life. But St. Jerome's mighty dialectics refuted their doctrines and Pope Siricius condemned them. The monks themselves, in concert with the secular clergy, were able to continue their work of regeneration in the midst of the Greco-Roman world then decaying.

#### Christian Life

This task was one of the heaviest the Church ever had to perform. True, with Constantine and Theodosius, the power of the State was officially placed at the service of the Church. Constantine was called "the defender of the holy canons"; Valentinian, Gratian, and Theodosius took St. Ambrose for their adviser. But, while her means of action were enlarged, the Church saw her task growing.

"I am confident," said Constantine, "that, if I should succeed in bringing all men to adore the same God, this religious change would bring about a change in the Empire." 164 He was right, if by "adoring God" he meant that men should conform their whole life to their belief. The Christian basilicas were full of people, the pagan temples were empty. But a kind of official paganism persisted in the public institutions. The selling of children and even of adults was still practiced in the time of St. Basil. Woman did not yet have her due position in the family. The plague of slavery continued. Immoral and cruel entertainments still sullied the public festivities. Criminal justice was administered with inhuman harshness, and a perpetual wretchedness kept alive a constant incitation to revolt. From the Christian pulpit bishops and priests forcibly pointed to the abuses. Aided by the monks and the laity and sustained by the Christian rulers, they labored effectively to abolish these abuses.

From the beginning of the century, the Church, in her councils, imposed severe penalties on the criminal practices used by parents to rid themselves of their children. But so hard were social conditions for the poor and so deep-rooted were the customs sanctioning such cruelties that in St. Basil's time these sights were still to be seen. The eloquent Bishop of Caesarea depicts a poor wretch pursued by the Treasury or by his creditor and seeking some expedient. "Money? He has none. A piece of furniture he might sell? His furniture is merely that of the poor. He has nothing to sell except his children. Witness the struggle between hunger and paternal

<sup>164</sup> Eusebius, Life of Constantine, II, 65.

<sup>165</sup> Council of Elvira, canon 60; Council of Ancyra, canons 20, 21.

love. He decides, then revokes his decision, and finally yields. . . . But which of the children will he sell? One of them, or two? What will the others think of him, suspicious that he may some day betray them in a like manner? Sell all of them? How could he any longer live in the house thus made empty by his own act? How could he sit at table, with its ample supply of food bought at such a price?" 186

Emperor Constantine, Valentinian I, and Valentinian II tried to cure the evil by laws. <sup>167</sup> The remedy vainly sought for in the laws the Church alone found in the heart of her faithful, in the promises made in God's presence. Christians gather in the abandoned children and pledge themselves, at the foot of the altar, to bring them up as their own children if the parents who abandoned them do not reclaim them within a certain time. This practice was made definite and official and was regulated by a council held about the middle of the fifth century. <sup>168</sup>

The Church was also at pains to fortify the child against the pagan influences it would encounter in the public schools. In 376, after Emperor Gratian had given cities the right to choose their teachers of grammar and rhetoric, 169 many Christian schools were started. Following the method so eloquently set forth by St. Basil, 170 these schools sought to derive from the study of the great writers of antiquity not lessons in voluptuousness, but solely models in the art of speaking.

<sup>166</sup> St. Basil, Homilies on St. Luke, XLI, 4. Cf. St. Ambrose, who translates St. Basil, In Tobiam, 9-11, 16-20, 23 f.; St. Augustine, On Marriage and Concupiscence, bk. 1, chap. 17 (alias 15).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> Theodosian Code, De parricid., Ad legem com., De patribus qui filios, De infantibus expositis.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> First Council of Vaison (422), canon 9. On Christian legislation about the *alumni* and abandoned infants, see art. "Alumni," in the Dictionnaire d'archéologue chrétienne, I, 1301–1305.

<sup>169</sup> Theodosian Code, XIII, II.

<sup>170</sup> St. Basil, On the Way to Read the Profane Authors.

#### Condition of Women

We may say that the civil emancipation of woman was almost a debt which Christianity paid her. During the persecutions great numbers of women gave an example of wonderful courage. Since the peace of the Church numerous virgins and widows had been devoting themselves to the service of charity. Yet, according to Roman law, motherhood established nothing more than a simple bond of natural right, which the civil law did not confirm. The old jurisprudence assimilated the mother, in the government of the family, with her own children. She was in the position of their sister before the all-powerful paterfamilias of ancient Rome. Constantine merely gave her a tutelary right. Justinian for the first time proclaimed that the mother is legally her children's parent.<sup>171</sup> Happily the Church did not wait for these legal reforms before honoring woman as being the equal of man. The patrician noblewomen whom Jerome associated with his labors, by the lofty culture of their minds no less than by the virtues of their lives, showed that they were deserving of the honors which Christianity accorded their sex.

### Slavery

The strife of Christianity against slavery was long and arduous. The moral and economic consequences of slavery were disastrous, directly in conflict with the principles of the Gospel. It resulted in the lowering of wages, in the almost complete crushing of the free workman, and in the stopping of all industrial progress. Considered in its moral aspect, it likewise debased both servant and master: the servant was reduced to the condition of a beast of burden, of a being without rights or duties; the master was puffed up in his pride and

<sup>171</sup> Justinian Code, De successione liberorum.

in his indecent and cruel caprices by the unrestrained power given him over human creatures. But in the fourth century, slavery was still a public institution on which, for ages past, all society rested, in the Empire and outside it.

It would have been perilous all at once to free the millions 172 of men who formed this pitiable caste. To lessen the rigors of slavery, to facilitate the individual emancipation of the slaves and inspire them with the just sense of their dignity, were the only feasible means. And these means the Church used simultaneously. In the matter of slavery, a difference can be observed between the language of the Latin Fathers and that of the Greek Fathers. The former did not deny in principle the lawfulness of the institution, understood in the sense of a hereditary servitude; 173 but they wanted the rights of Christian conscience to be always respected and the servant to be treated as an equal, a brother. St. Augustine said: "There are masters, and there are slaves; the words are different. But there are men and men; the two words are identical." 174 With the Greek Fathers the distinction between master and slave was not an empty word, 175 it was a wicked distinction, 176 the name of a crime against the natural law. St. Gregory of Nyssa, for example, declares: "How can you, a man yourself, call yourself the master of another man? . . . Do you say you bought him? Pray tell me, what price did you find that could equal the value of a man? At how much did you evaluate reason? How many oboli did you give for the image of God?" 177

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>172</sup> Both Pompey and Caesar boasted of having sold or killed three million men. In three days Cicero obtained the equivalent of \$400,000 from the sale of prisoners.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>173</sup> St. Ambrose, De Joseph patriarcha, chap. 4; Letters 37-77; Ambrosiaster, Commentarium in Coloss., IV, 1; St. Augustine, City of God, XIX, 15.

<sup>174 &</sup>quot;Sunt domini, sunt et servi; diversa sunt nomina. Sed homines et homines; paria sunt nomina." In psalmos, 124: 17

<sup>175</sup> St. Chrysostom, De Lazario, VI, 8.

<sup>176</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, Poems, XXIII, 133-140.

<sup>177</sup> St. Gregory of Nyssa, In Ecclesiasten, fourth homily.

# Monasticism and Slavery

Fiery words like these were of a sort to hasten the movement of the emancipation of slaves. Monastic life, too, was a no less eloquent sermon to the same effect. The Basilian monasteries, according to their rule, offered asylum to slaves imperiled by the immorality or cruelty of their masters. 178 As St. Augustine said, "Not to admit them is a heavy sin." 179 Many of these slaves thus lived in the monasteries, mingling with personages of the highest rank, sometimes with their former masters, working in common, on a footing of perfect equality with them. 180 St. Ambrose even broke up the vessels of his Church and sold them to redeem captives. 181 The devout laity followed like impulses. We have numerous examples of wealthy Christians freeing their slaves out of regard for the dignity of man and the image of God, or to obtain some grace, 182 or to seek pardon for their sins. 183 The most famous example is that of the Roman lady of senatorial rank, St. Melania, freeing eight thousand slaves at one time. 184

A law enacted some time after 367 notably ameliorated the lot of the slaves. "It forbids the selling of rural slaves without the sale of the estate to which they are attached.<sup>185</sup> In fact, the Christian emperors had felt the necessity of maintaining a sufficient agricultural personnel in the country.<sup>186</sup> At that

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178 St. Basil, Regulae fusius tractatae, 11.
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<sup>179</sup> St. Augustine, De opere monach., 25.

<sup>180</sup> Rampolla, Santa Melania giuniore, p. 222.

<sup>181</sup> St. Ambrose, Duties of the Clergy, bk. 2, chap. 28.

<sup>182</sup> De Rossi, Bulletino di archeologia cristiana, 1874, p. 59.

<sup>183</sup> Le Blant, Inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule, no. 374; vol. II (1865), p. 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>184</sup> Goyau, Sainte Mélanie, pp. 90-93. See other examples in Allard, Les Esclaves chrétiens, p. 338.

<sup>185</sup> Justinian Code, XL, LXVII, 7.

<sup>186</sup> Accarias (Précis de droit romain, I, 97 ff.), G. Boissier (Revue des Deux Mondes, March 1, 1882), and Lacour-Gayet (Antonin le Pieux et son temps, p. 263) either deny or greatly lessen the credit belonging to the Christian emperors in the

time there were two classes of slaves: the city slaves, whose legal status was not changed and who continued to be sold as chattels; and the rural slaves, who thereafter could not be alienated without the land to which they were legally incorporated, and who became what the legal terminology called fixtures. Owing to economic circumstances, this law was an immense advance in the condition of a category of slaves forming the most numerous portion of the servile population. To this provision we can trace the origin of serfdom, which gradually became an intermediate state between slavery and freedom." 187

#### The Theater

The comedian of ancient Rome was not really a slave. Yet few forms of servitude were more humiliating than his. "The theater was the most lively, the most ardent, the last passion of the Roman people. They continued to be pagans on the seats of the amphitheater when they were not so anywhere else. They clung to their actors as to the last remnant of the old Roman grandeur. To gratify this desire, the emperors did for the theatrical profession what they did for so many others: they made it compulsory. The actor, the comedienne, nay more, the actor's son and the comedienne's daughter were obliged to undergo the infamy until death. They had to dance on the stage or sing indecent songs or perform the obscenities of the thymele, seach according to his specialty, until their very last breath, however great might be their weariness or shame or disgust or remorse. See Allerd Les Escleres.

abolition of slavery. For the refutation of their assertions, see Allard, Les Esclaves chrétiens, and art. "Esclavage" in the Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique, I, 1479-1482.

<sup>187</sup> Allard, art. "Esclavage" in the Dictionnaire apologétique, I, 1481.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>188</sup> The *thymele*, in the Greek theaters, was a square platform in the middle of what we call the orchestra. There the *chorus* performed and the acting took place.

<sup>189</sup> St. Augustine, *De fide et opere*, 30.

from the theater and became a religious. The city prefect claimed her with armed force and besieged the convent that tried to shield her.<sup>190</sup> Another time the Emperor, in the exercise of his omnipotence, thought he might free some comedians of Carthage. The people, thus robbed, protested. The Emperor yielded and commanded that the unfortunate victims be subjected to the yoke a second time." <sup>191</sup>

The Church Fathers exhausted their eloquence against this passion for the circus, the mimes, and the amphitheater. <sup>192</sup> As in the case of the fugitive slaves, the Church received the comedians who escaped from the theater and offered them the bread of her alms. <sup>193</sup> She obtained the enactment of a law by which no comedian, after becoming a disciple of Christ, would be compelled to return to the stage. <sup>194</sup> Later laws extended the same benefit to the daughters of comedians if they were baptized, and even to pagan women whose conduct was upright. <sup>195</sup> But not until Emperor Leo do we see this principle proclaimed, that no woman, slave or free, could be enrolled in a theatrical troupe against her will.

### Criminal Law

There was another remnant of ancient inhumanity. It seemed irradicable and resisted the repeated efforts of the Church. We refer to the criminal law. The sight of condemned persons tortured by the cross, the sword, the wooden horse, or the iron claws, was a spectacle which the people were very fond of. "Everything was against Christian gentleness: the populace, accustomed to the spectacle of torture; the

<sup>190</sup> St. Chrysostom, On St. Matthew, homily 67; P. G., LVIII, 657.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>191</sup> Champagny, La Charité chrétienne dans les premiers siècles de l'Église, pp. 228– 231.

<sup>192</sup> St. Chrysostom, On St. John, homily I.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>193</sup> St. Augustine, loc. cit.

<sup>194</sup> Theodosian Code, De scenicis, 4, 8, 9.

<sup>195</sup> lbidem.

judges, who regarded it as the guarantee of society; the whole pagan hierarchy of public prosecutors and palace officials; the rulers themselves, Christian though they were, who were too much imbued with the maxims of imperial despotism. When their power was threatened, it would seem that their faith left them. We have Constantine putting excessively rigorous penalties in his code; Constantius ascending the throne by putting his father's nephews to death; Theodosius signing the decree of proscription against Antioch and Thessalonica.

"Against this tenacious tradition of ancient harshness, the Church offered all the treasures of Christian clemency; against pagan inhumanity she offered what we might almost call an excess of mercy, a mildness that seemed to go beyond the limits of justice." <sup>196</sup> St. Ambrose and St. Martin refused to renew the bonds of communion with the bishops who contributed to the death of Priscillian. Some bishops even applied the same sanction to any judge who imposed a death sentence. To one magistrate who questioned him on this point, St. Ambrose replied:

"Many too abstain of their own accord, and are commended, nor can we ourselves but praise them, although we so far observe the Apostle's rule as not to dare to refuse them communion. . . . You will be excused if you do it, and praised if you do it not." <sup>197</sup>

"A bishop," writes St. Augustine, "detests the crime, but pities the man. The Lord intervened for the adulterous woman. Thus has He laid upon us the duty of intervening." <sup>198</sup> Constantine abolished three kinds of punishment: the combat in the arena, branding on the forehead, and execution on the cross. Valens, Valentinian, and Theodosius moderated the

<sup>196</sup> Champagny, op. cit., p. 238.

<sup>197</sup> St. Ambrose, Epistola ad Studium, VI, 51 f.

<sup>198</sup> St. Augustine, Letters 50, 127, 158.

prison regulations. Among prisoners the two sexes were separated; a regular inspection was established over the regime of those imprisoned. Negligence by a judge was punished with exile, and a jailer's barbarity to a prisoner was subject to the death penalty.

## The Right of Asylum

One of the priceless victories of the Church over the cruelty of the criminal law was the right of asylum. Even in pagan antiquity the magistrates halted at the threshold of the temples to which criminals had fled. Soon to the Christian churches there flocked the persecuted, the accused, the condemned, insolvent debtors, fugitive slaves. The clergy let them stay, but did not guarantee them safety nor claim a right to break the law, but tried to make it bend. The bishop or priest in charge of the church, taking a refugee under his temporary protection, had time to inquire, and to negotiate in his behalf. If he were a victim of political wrath, they obtained a sworn promise that his life would be respected. If he were a fugitive slave, they interceded with his master. If he were a debtor crushed by misfortune, often they paid his debts. We have a touching letter of St. Augustine asking the loan of seventeen bags of gold to pay the debt of one of these protégés of the Church. Little by little the office of "defender of the city," conferred upon bishops, gives them a real civil and criminal jurisdiction and, by a steady influence, introduces principles of equity and mercy even into secular justice.

The cause of many evils of that period was poverty; and the principal cause of poverty was idleness. A free man considered manual labor beneath his dignity; and as slaves labored only through fear, their labor was not very productive. Pliny said: "The earth is reluctant and indignant at being tended in such a manner as this . . . by slaves whose legs are

in chains." <sup>199</sup> The example of the labor of monks, clergy, and true Christians, working with their hands, elevated the idea of manual labor. But, while waiting for the fruit of these examples, something had to be done about the urgent destitution. The Church did not falter in this duty.

The first form of ecclesiastical assistance was hospitality. The monastery door, as also that of the bishop's house, was always open to the traveler. This hospitality was not blind. It had its rules and, in a way, its etiquette, which may be seen in the Apostolic Constitutions. The bishop or the head of the monastery, after reading the newcomer's letters of recommendation, treated him according to his needs, his deserts, and his dignity.<sup>200</sup> We know, from the testimony of St. Augustine,<sup>201</sup> St. Jerome,<sup>202</sup> and other fourth century writers, that this hospitality was often a heavy burden.

Some bishops, in order to fulfil this duty more adequately, erected special buildings, as St. Basil did. 203 Thus were founded the *xenodochia*, or pilgrims' hospices, in charge of a priest, more often a monk, who, having come from the desert, bore a closer resemblance to his guests. We find *xenodochia* at Constantinople, Bethlehem, Amasia, and on the coasts of Italy. The *xenodochium* was a sort of motherhouse of all the charitable institutions: the *nosocomium*, or hospital for the sick, the *orphanotrophium* for orphans, the *brephotrophium* for foundlings, the *gerontocomium* for the aged, and the *ptochotrophium* for the poor in general. From St. Jerome we know about the wonderful foundations of Fabiola, the wealthy patrician who we see, to the great amazement of high Roman society, collect the poor sick abandoned in the Forum, with her own hands bathe their sores which others were reluctant

<sup>199</sup> Pliny, Natural History, XVIII, 4.

<sup>200</sup> Constitutio apostolorum, 11, 58.

<sup>201</sup> St. Augustine, Sermons, 49; Possidius, Vita Augustini, 22, 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>202</sup> St. Jerome, In Ezechielem, Epistolae 13, 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>203</sup> See supra, p. 252.

even to look at, and take such delicate care of them that these poor wretches became an object of envy to people who were quite well.<sup>204</sup>

Those without time or means to engage in these outward works, could at least aid them with alms. Such gifts, made as donations or legacies, in money or in kind, must have been very abundant, because the amount spent by the Church in charity was immense. For example, the Church of Constantinople, in the time of St. John Chrysostom, fed three thousand poor people whose names were in its register, besides a multitude of prisoners, of sick people in its hospitals, and of strangers in its hospices.<sup>205</sup> The administrator of all these works was always the bishop, but his juridical position at the close of the fourth century was quite differently defined from what it had previously been.

# Episcopal Administration

Before the fourth century, Church property was owned by individuals, who placed it at the service of the community. Since then it had become the property of the body of Christians, who held ownership as "colleges" or religious corporations. The legal representative of these associations was the bishop. But such a legal situation was not in agreement with the Christian notion of the Church. The Church is the mystical body of Christ, a holy institution founded by Jesus Christ upon the pope and the bishops. As such it is not a simple

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>204</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>205</sup> St. Chrysostom, On St. Matthew, homily 66; P. G., LVIII, 630.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>206</sup> Legally the management of church property belonged to the bishop; and during the fourth and fifth century this legal right was always exercised. (Thomassin, Ancienne et nouvelle discipline de l'Église, VI, 509; Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, II, 520.) But, in this management, the bishops were aided by deacons and priests, from whom they received reports. In the East, beginning in 451, the bishops entrusted this management to treasurers chosen from the clergy. (Thomassin, etc. cit., pp. 511, 515, 519 f.)

aggregation of the faithful. It is their mother, their fatherland, constituted for them, but not by them. In the course of the fourth century, legal expressions used by the Christian emperors finally and imperceptibly brought civil legislation into accord with ecclesiastical law. At the end of this development, Church property could be called not only, as it had been previously, the goods of the poor, the goods of God, but also the goods of the Church in the strictest sense which Christian speech attached to this word.<sup>207</sup>

Thus the growth of charity, the splendor of public worship, and the purity of doctrine advanced hand in hand. After less than a century of freedom, the dogma of the Church had withstood the attacks of the most perfidious heresies, piety expressed itself in magnificent and impressive ceremonies. In all sections of the Empire the charity of Christ had begun, against pagan egoism, the great strife that would decide the progress or decay of civilization in the world.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>207</sup> See Lesne, Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France, pp. 1-3.

# PART III

THE CHURCH FREED FROM THE EMPIRE

#### CHAPTER I

# From the Death of Theodosius the Great to the Coming of Valentinian III (395-425)

From Constantine to Theodosius, despite almost ceaseless anguish and strife, the Church continually grew stronger in her dogma, her worship, and her discipline. In the midst of the Empire, which was breaking up under the tumultuous inrushing tide of barbarians, the Church remained the only power left. Unhappily, various influences accentuated the disagreements existing between the East and the West. The Eastern rulers, accustomed to interfere in religious affairs, more than once sustained the dissenting parties. Hence arose new inner disturbances which ended in a lamentable schism.

The partition of the Roman world, effected by Theodosius between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, was for both Empires (Eastern and Western) the beginning of a rapid and definite decline. Arcadius, to whom fell the government of the East, was only eighteen years old. Honorius, who had to undertake the government of the West, was not yet eleven. Arcadius had a weak character. During the thirteen years of his reign he was dominated successively by the Gascon Rufinus, the eunuch Eutropius, the Gothic general Gainas, and the Empress Eudoxia. All of these strove to gratify their own ambitions, their personal interests, or their grudges. Theodosius II, Arcadius' son and successor, was sincerely religious; but his good qualities were merely those of a private individual and did not rise to the greatness of his task. The young Honorius never advanced beyond childhood during the eighteen years of his reign. For his guardian he had the Vandal general Stilicho. This latter, a capable warrior, succeeded in restraining the barbarians for a while. But, suspected of betraying the cause of Rome and for this reason condemned to death, he left the Empire with no defense against the enemies from without.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Barbarian Invasions

Yet the two Empires were never in greater need of active, military rulers. Emperor Theodosius had hardly closed his eyes when the barbarians crossed the frontiers. Arcadius helplessly witnessed the ravaging of the finest provinces of the East by the Goths. Alaric, their chief, then led them to the West, took Rome by assault, and sacked it. Like Stilicho, he was one of those barbarian auxiliaries who, after entering the service of the Empire, often excelled Roman generals in military skill. They filled the ranks of the legions. Those who did not turn against their masters, as Alaric did, became the emperors' guardians, like Rufinus and Stilicho, and the result was the same.

Were it not for the disastrous state of the public finances in addition to the disorganization of the armies and the impossibility of reviving the old patriotism in the masses, the decline of the two Empires might have been, if not arrested, at least retarded. But the Treasury was ruined. The taxes, advanced by decurions, who afterward at their own risk and peril sought to reimburse themselves from the taxpayers, weighed heavily upon the people without enriching the State. The whole class of freemen, which formerly constituted the heart and center of the Roman people, scarcely existed any more in the country districts. A great number of small landowners, ruined by countless burdens and obligations, had been reduced to cultivating the lands of the great as *coloni*, and

<sup>1</sup> On these events, see Tillemont, Histoire des empereurs (1701 ed.), V, 419 ff.

little by little fell into a state bordering on serfdom.<sup>2</sup> "The name of Roman citizen, once not only much valued but dearly bought, is now voluntarily repudiated and shunned, and is thought not merely valueless, but even most abhorrent." <sup>3</sup>

These are the words of Salvianus. Again and again we see the barbarians enter some populous city without meeting any resistance, the inhabitants being in such a state of discouragement that they no longer cared to defend themselves.<sup>4</sup> We see even Romans and Greeks seeking a refuge among the barbarians, preferring to live free among them that submit to the oppression of the imperial officials.<sup>5</sup>

This brief glance at the political and social situation of the two Empires will help to a better understanding of the importance and difficulty of the mission the Church undertook after the death of Theodosius.

## Pope St. Anastasius

At the coming of Arcadius and Honorius, the see of Rome was still occupied by Pope Siricius. We are not acquainted with any document of this Pope which shows him taking an active part in the great political events of his time. We possess only a few of his letters, and these indicate that he was concerned, as at the outset of his pontificate, with the maintenance of order in the small details of the administration of the sacraments and of the life of the clergy.<sup>6</sup>

At his death, which occurred November 26, 398, the people and clergy of Rome chose as his successor the Roman Anastasius (Anastasius I), who occupied the Apostolic See three

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Fustel de Coulanges, Colonat romain, in his Problèmes d'histoire.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Salvianus, On the Government of God. V. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., V, 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid., V, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See Jaffé, I, 41 f. (nos, 262-272), and P. L., XIII, 1129 f., 1164; XVI, 1282; XXII, 1093; XXIII, 471; XXX, 485; LI, 588.

years and ten days. The Liber pontificalis says "he decreed that, during the reading of the Gospel, the priests should stand with bowed heads, he addressed a constitution to the Church, he built the Crescentian Basilica in Rome on Via Mamertina, and, when alarmed by the large influx of Manichaeans into Rome, he decided that no priest should any longer be admitted to ecclesiastical communion unless he presented a letter of recommendation signed by five bishops." The constitution mentioned by the Liber pontificalis is unknown. The Crescentian Basilica has not been positively identified, but certain ruins discovered on Via de Marforio between the Forum and Piazza Venezia are probably those of the church referred to. Despite what is said in certain editions of the Liber pontificalis, the testimonial letters spoken of concerned ecclesiastical communion or communication, and not ordination.<sup>7</sup> Pope Anastasius' letters show him in correspondence with the East and West, regulating cases of discipline about offerings made to bishops, and exercising his authority in the Origenist and Donatist disputes.8

## Pope St. Innocent I

Anastasius' successor, Innocent I, was born at Albano. During the fifteen years of his pontificate he exerted even more effective influence in the great events of the universal Church. He interposed his supreme authority in the Pelagian controversy. Besides this intervention the official notice about his pontificate mentions the constitutions he addressed to the universal Church about Jews and pagans. We see his zeal against the heretical communities in Rome. Several decretals of this pope are preserved. In the matter of general discipline

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Liber pontificalis, I, 218 f.

<sup>8</sup> Jaffé, I, 42 f. (nos. 273-284).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 48 (no. 318).

the most important are addressed to Victricius bishop of Rouen,<sup>10</sup> Exuperius bishop of Toulouse,<sup>11</sup> the bishops of Illyricum,<sup>12</sup> Decentius bishop of Eugubium (Gubbio),<sup>13</sup> and Felix bishop of Nocera.<sup>14</sup>

### Pope St. Zosimus

Pope Zosimus, Innocent's successor, reigned one year, three months, and eleven days. We possess his famous *Tractoria* against Pelagius, and his important disciplinary regulation about ordinations. At his death a schism suddenly broke out. Probably it can be attributed to the abusive interference of the civil power in ecclesiastical elections. We know its details from official documents discovered and published by Baronius. Baronius.

## Pope St. Boniface

On Friday, December 17, 418, after the obsequies of the dead pope, a mob, led by the archdeacon Eulalius and some members of the clergy, suddenly broke into the Lateran Basilica, drove out the priests there assembled for the election according to the regular procedure, and chose Eulalius himself as Bishop of Rome. But the evicted clergy presently met in another church, where they conferred the supreme authority upon the Roman priest Boniface, an old man who was venerated by all. Eulalius had on his side Symmachus, the prefect of Rome, who made every effort to win the Emperor's support for the usurper. But the electors of Boniface pleaded

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    Ibid., p. 44 (no. 286).
    Ibid., p. 45 (no. 293).
    Ibid., p. 46 (no. 303).
    Ibid., p. 47 (no. 311).
    Ibid., p. 47 (no. 314).
    Ibid., p. 50 (no. 339); P. L., LVI, 571.
    Baronius, Annales, years 418, 419. Cf. P. L., XVIII, 397-406.
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their case so forcefully that Honorius, after inquiry, declared himself against Eulalius. The audacious antipope, surrounded by his followers, barricaded himself in the Lateran Basilica. The use of armed force was required to dislodge him. Two days later (April 10, 419) the lawful pope was solemnly installed in the Pontifical See amid unanimous applause. The next year, when Boniface fell seriously ill, some ringleaders tried to stir up a fresh outbreak, but the Emperor's timely action prevented the uprising. In his oratory dedicated to St. Felicitas, Boniface put up an inscription attributing the success of his cause to that glorious martyr. It read:

"Si titulum quaeris, meritum de nomine signat; Ne opprimerer dux fuit ista mihi."

We have letters of Boniface to the bishops of Gaul. From these it is evident that his sovereign supremacy extended over the episcopate of the whole world.<sup>17</sup> He also exercised his authority in the dispute raised by Pelagius.<sup>18</sup>

# Pope St. Celestine

Pope Celestine was a native of Campania. According to St. Augustine, <sup>19</sup> he was elected unanimously immediately after the death of Boniface. At the very beginning of his pontificate he had to take a hand in a knotty question affecting the authority of the Roman See, an affair which regrettable misunderstandings rendered very confused. An African priest, Apiarius, who had been excommunicated by his bishop in Pope Zosimus' time, appealed his case to the Bishop of Rome. Did he have a right to do so? For the pope and for the bishops of Italy, Gaul, and Spain, the answer would be unquestionably

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Jaffé, I, 53 f. (nos. 349, 359). Cf. p. 53 (no. 350).

<sup>18</sup> P. L., XX, 271.

<sup>19</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 209 (to Celestine).

that he did. The canons of Sardica, which had been joined to those of Nicaea and were even regarded as an integral part of the latter, were explicit about the right of appeal to the Roman pontiff. But when the latter invoked the canons of Nicaea, the Africans, who were not acquainted with the canons of Sardica, protested, even basing their contention on the Council of Nicaea. Celestine, resuming Zosimus' procedure, called up the case of Apiarius. But this priest was really guilty. A Council of Carthage (424) convicted him of the charges made against him. We have not Celestine's reply to the notice sent him by the Council of Carthage. It is certain, however, that Apiarius' appeal to the pope did the priest no good; he was guilty, not of appealing to the Supreme Pontiff, but of doing so in behalf of a bad cause.

These were the pontiffs who followed each other in the see of Rome from the death of Theodosius to the coming of Valentinian III. During this time Augustine, contending against Pelagius, illumined the most difficult problems of theology with the clearest light that had shone in the world since St. Paul; and Chrysostom, at the zenith of his fame, filled the East with the sound of his eloquence. Neither Siricius, Anastasius, Innocent, Zosimus, nor Boniface could lay claim to the genius of Chrysostom or Augustine. Yet, whenever there was need of settling a dispute or of ending a conflict, it was not to Chrysostom or Augustine, but to the Roman Pontiffs that rulers and people turned. It was before their doctrinal decisions that the genius of Augustine bowed.

# Origenist Controversy

The state of disorder following the death of Theodosius favored many disturbances. In the Church three major disputes soon overshadowed all the others: the Origenist controversy, in which St. Jerome and St. Chrysostom engaged, and the Donatist and Pelagian disputes, in which St. Augustine became especially active.

After Jerome's renunciation of the world, among the friendships he formed none was warmer or purer than that which bound him to Rufinus, a young priest of Aquileia. When he was ill in the Chalcis desert, he wrote to Rufinus, saying: "If only the Lord Jesus Christ would suddenly transport me to you as Philip was transported to the eunuch, and Habacuc to Daniel, how closely I would embrace you." <sup>20</sup>

A common love of solitude and the sacred sciences united these two souls. With the same earnestness they studied the writings of Origen, and in that study found a source of satisfaction for mind and heart. Jerome wrote: "Is not Origen the teacher of the Churches, after the Apostles?" <sup>21</sup> But Jerome's enthusiasm for the Alexandrian doctor later grew cool, and his sharp and positive mind was shocked at the singularity of certain of Origen's ideas, for instance, his opinion regarding the preëxistence of souls and other questions incautiously raised by him. <sup>22</sup>

Origen, during his life, was gentle and peaceful. But he was destined, after his death, to divide those who had recourse to his immense work. In the complex, profound, and daring thought of that powerful mind, each one instinctively chose what was agreeable to his own moral or doctrinal temperament. Whereas Epiphanius of Salamis and Eustathius of Antioch charge Origen with being a promoter of heresy, Gregory Thaumaturgus and Gregory of Nyssa glorify him as a master.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 3 (to Rufinus); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Idem, De nominibus hebraicis, Preface.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Idem, Letter 84 (to Pammachius and Oceanus); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 175 ff.

## St. Jerome and Rufinus

Jerome and Rufinus were separated by profound differences of character, that were not perceived in the first enthusiasm of youthful friendship, but were brought to light by time and circumstances. Jerome was ardent, sincere, spontaneous, vehement to the point of rudeness; Rufinus was polite but selfish, somewhat rigorous, extremely sensitive to offense, and ever ready to reply thereto with cold irony or clever sophistry. Jerome was the more violent; Rufinus, the more bitter.

Both men were free from worldly trammels, both nourished their souls on the Scripture, both were then living in Palestine where the Savior had left the trace of His footsteps and the echo of His peaceful words. At the very beginning more than one disagreement about details were evident between the two friends, yet their sincere piety allayed every danger of disunion between them. But, from 394 onward, various successive events led to a painful rupture between these two zealous defenders of the Church.

The first of these events was the arrival in the East of an obscure monk named Aterbius,<sup>23</sup> who held the anthropomorphist errors spread in some monasteries of that period.<sup>24</sup> Attributing a human form to God, the anthropomorphites particularly abhorred Origenism, with its exegesis that excessively spiritualized the meaning of Scripture. Upon learning that Origen was being studied in the monasteries of Palestine, Aterbius indignantly presented to the Bishop of Jerusalem a denunciation of Jerome and Rufinus, the two leaders of the cenobitical life in Palestine. Rufinus and John, the young bishop of Jerusalem, over whom Rufinus already had great influence, would not deign to take notice of the denunciation by an unauthorized monk. But Jerome, who was

<sup>23</sup> Idem, Adversus Rufinum, III, 23.

<sup>24</sup> Cassian, Coll., X, 3.

not a man of cool calculation, was stung by the calumny and forcefully repelled the charge so far as it concerned him. This move was at least imprudent. Rufinus regarded it as a cowardly desertion and communicated his impression to the Bishop.

At this juncture Epiphanius came to Jerusalem. Ever on the watch in his Island of Cyprus, at the first report of an Origenist movement in Palestine he resolved to see for himself the extent of what he considered a supreme danger to the Church. In his eyes Origenism was a caprice in exegesis, it was an undermining of the fundamental doctrines about the origin of man and the future life. At Eastertime the old warrior, with the halo of sanctity, made his entry into the Holy City, in the midst of a throng that pressed about him, eagerly seeking his blessing and tearing off pieces of his garments to keep as relics. The Bishop of Jerusalem invited him to speak to the people assembled in the Anastasis church. Epiphanius preached, raising his voice against those who falsified the Scriptures and altered the dogma of the Church, in a word, against the followers of Origen. The evening of that same day, Bishop John ascended the pulpit and stigmatized those who, perhaps with the purpose of making the idea of God more exact, represented Him as having eyes, ears, and arms. As yet neither Rufinus nor Jerome was involved. But, in reality, the issue was their teaching and their monastic communities.

The opposition became more definite when the Bishop of Salamis, after taking leave of Bishop John, went to Bethlehem to Jerome, to whom he was bound by former relations. The break became public when Epiphanius, upon returning to his monastery of Ad, wrote to John, calling on him to condemn the theories of Origen, and to Jerome and his monks, warning them of the Origenist sympathies of their Bishop John.

#### Paulinian

Terome hesitated to break with his own bishop and negotiated with the Bishop of Salamis. But the latter, when in his monastery at Ad near Eleutheropolis, one day received Jerome's brother Paulinian, who had been sent as negotiator, and settled the whole matter by ordaining Paulinian almost by force. Paulinian, once he was a priest, could procure for the Bethlehem monks all the religious helps which they had been obliged to ask of the Jerusalem clergy, because a holy awe always kept Jerome and his friend the priest Vincent from exercising the sacred functions. Epiphanius thought he was not at all infringing upon the rights of the bishop of Jerusalem by performing a sacerdotal ordination in a monastery over which Bishop John could not claim to have any rights. But such was not the view of Bishop John, who forbade the priests at Bethlehem to admit into the Church of the Nativity or into the Grotto anyone who regarded Paulinian as a priest. The doctrinal dispute thus became a conflict of jurisdiction. Jerome obtained reassurance from the thought that he remained in communion with Gelasius of Caesarea, the metropolitan of Palestine.<sup>25</sup> Paula and her convents followed Jerome's line of conduct. But Melania was won by Rufinus and joined the side of the Bishop of Jerusalem. This desertion affected Jerome deeply and he could not hide his feelings; he said in a letter: "Her name bears witness to the blackness of her perfidy." 26

Thus far the civil authorities had not entered into the affair.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> It is certain that the see of Jerusalem, as the Council of Nicaea (canon 7) declares, enjoyed a "succession of honor"; but not until the first half of the fifth century was it made a patriarchate. The ecumenical Council of Chalcedon was the first to grant it the government of the three provinces of Palestine. (Hefele, III, 355, 382.)

<sup>26</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 133, no. 3 (to Ctesiphon). *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 274. "Melania," in Greek, means "black."

At Bishop John's request, the praetorian prefect, whose name was also Rufinus and who had been told the Bethlehem monks were schismatics, then took a hand in the matter and issued a decree of banishment against Jerome. But the decree was not carried out because of the invasion of the Huns and the fall of the prefect. But the result was to embitter men's minds. St. Jerome wrote:

"It is a monk, shame to say, who menaces monks and obtains decrees of exile against them; and that too a monk who boasts that he holds an Apostolic chair. But the monastic tribe does not succumb to terrorism. Is not every monk an exile from his country? Is he not an exile from the whole world? Where is the need for the public authority, the cost of a rescript? Let him but touch me with his little finger, and I will go into exile of myself." 27

What Jerome demands is that the question be referred to higher ecclesiastical authority. He says:

"It is decreed in the canons of the Council of Nicaea that Caesarea is the metropolis of Palestine, and Antioch of the whole of the East. You ought therefore either to appeal to the bishop of Caesarea or . . . letters ought rather to be addressed to Antioch." <sup>28</sup>

But John and Rufinus preferred to address the Bishop of Alexandria, Theophilus. He was a friend of both of them. As head of the Church of which Origen was the glory, he did not venture to repudiate the great Alexandrian. It could not then be foreseen that some day Theophilus would accuse of Origenism the venerable monks known under the name of Tall Brothers, and their protector Chrysostom. For the moment, the Patriarch and the priest Isidore, his special envoy, at first showed themselves hostile to Jerome, whom they regarded as a rebel against his bishop. But the dauntless hermit defended

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 82, no. 10 (to Theophilus). *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 174. <sup>28</sup> *Idem*, To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem, 37. *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 444.

himself and appealed to the authority of Epiphanius against what he considered the manifest error of Origenism as maintained by the Bishop of Jerusalem. He expressed his willingness to accept the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Caesarea or the metropolitan of Antioch or the Bishop of Rome. Epiphanius, in fact, did take the case to Pope Siricius. Finally, when Melania intervened with Rufinus, and Paula with Jerome, a reconciliation took place between the two venerable priests. On the feast of Easter, 397, they extended their hands to each other at the altar in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the presence of the Bishop of Jerusalem, who revoked the prohibitions he had issued against the Bethlehem monks. It seemed that permanent peace had come. But it did not last long. Somewhat later the conflict between Jerome and Rufinus began again, more bitter and stubborn than ever.

### Nepotian

At the very height of the strife which put him at odds with his bishop and with his former friend, Jerome received a hard blow from one whom he cherished with particular affection. One of his closest friends, among the companions of his first journeys, was Heliodorus whose nephew Nepotian was endowed with the rarest virtues. While in the emperor's service, Nepotian gave the court of Theodosius an example such as Francis Borgia and Aloysius Gonzaga later gave to the courts of Charles V and Philip II. Then, renouncing the world which had never ensnared him, he consecrated himself to the ministry of the altar. On that occasion Jerome wrote him a famous letter in which the hard duties of priestly life are enumerated. In this letter we read among other things, the following admonition:

"When teaching in church seek to call forth not plaudits but groans. Let the tears of your hearers be your glory. Be not a declaimer or a ranter; but show yourself skilled in the deep things and versed in the mysteries of God." 29

The letter was written in 394.

Two years later death came to the young man whom Heliodorus expected would be his successor in the see of Attino. In an eloquent letter Jerome bemoans the friend who has gone and endeavors to console the one who remains. Therein, describing the serene death of the young priest, he says:

"His countenance shone with gladness, and while all around him wept, he and he only smiled. You would have thought that he was starting on a journey instead of dying and that in place of leaving all his friends behind him he was merely passing from some to others." <sup>80</sup>

"This funeral eulogy, the forerunner of so many masterpieces of Christian eloquence, contains a severe picture of the evils then ravaging the world." <sup>31</sup> Jerome depicts the terrible invasion of the Huns, and says:

"Civil wars have made almost greater havoc among us than the swords of foreign foes." The eulogy concludes with a melancholy return to the frailty of human beings. "Let us return to ourselves," Jerome writes. "Every day we are changing, every day we are dying. The very moments that I spend in dictation, in writing, in reading over what I write, and in correcting it, are so much taken from my life. . . . Charity never faileth. It lives always in the heart, and thus our Neoptian though absent is still present and, widely sundered though we are, has a hand to offer to each." 32

As Jerome was writing these lines, the Origenist dispute was about to revive.

<sup>29</sup> Idem, Letter 52, no. 8 (to Nepotian). Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 93.

<sup>30</sup> Idem, Letter 60, no. 13 (to Heliodorus). Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 128.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Largent, Saint Jérôme, pp. 72 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 60, no. 18 f. (to Heliodorus). *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 130 f.

### Translation of the Peri Archon

After the Easter reconciliation in 397, Rufinus set out for Rome. There he at once made the acquaintance of a certain Macarius, "a man distinguished by his faith, his noble birth, and his manner of life." Macarius had undertaken to justify the dogma of divine Providence against the attacks of pagan fatalism, and was looking for some scholars who would furnish him with the philosophical and Scriptural documents he needed for his thesis. Rufinus seemed to him the very man he wanted. The priest of Aquileia was assuredly one of the most erudite men of his age. Macarius did not know Greek. At his request Rufinus first translated the Apology for Origen by the holy martyr Pamphilus, then the great philosophical work of the illustrious Alexandrian doctor, the famous Peri Archon, suppressing all the propositions contrary to the decisions of Nicaea. In his preface he declared this procedure was sanctioned by the example of "one greater than he," one who had thus treated Origen's homilies. Everybody saw that he was referring to Jerome. By this daring stroke Rufinus attempted to rehabilitate his favorite author and at the same time compromise his recent opponent. The step was, to say the least, ill-considered.33

Jerome did not repudiate his former work. That the faithful might be able to profit from Origen's sublime teaching, he had expurgated the great doctor's *Homilies*. But now the situation was quite changed. Heretics appealed to the learned Alexandrian in justification of ideas that were destructive of the Christian religion. Was this the time to glorify him by presenting him as a guiding light; especially since Rufinus, by suppressing merely the propositions contrary to the Nicene decrees, seemed to accept and adopt a multitude of other dangerous tenets?

<sup>83</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 453.

"Does any one," says Jerome, "wish to praise Origen? Let him praise him as I do. From his childhood he was a great man, and truly a martyr's son. He greatly abhorred sensuality. Covetousness he trampled under foot. He knew the Scriptures by heart and labored hard day and night to explain their meaning. Let us not imitate the faults of one whose virtues we cannot equal." <sup>34</sup>

Jerome thought his best answer to Rufinus' work would be to translate Origen's *Principia* unabridged. It would be better, he considered, resolutely to make known the errors and temerities of the Alexandrian doctor. He did more than this. Bishop Theophilus, under various influences that were not all praiseworthy, had turned sharply against Origenism. Jerome took a hand in the campaign by translating the Bishop's synodal letters. Perhaps he also translated a bitter pamphlet which, according to Facundus of Hermiane, a sixth century author, was written by the Patriarch of Alexandria. Says Tillemont: "For the sake of his honor, it is something we wish were not so." <sup>35</sup>

### Rufinus' Apologia

Rufinus replied by the publication of his *Apologia*.<sup>36</sup> In this he accuses Jerome, not only of contradicting himself, but of being, at bottom, an incorrigible defamer: a defamer of St. Ambrose, a defamer of Rome, a defamer of the Christian people, a defamer of everybody. In fine he charges that Jerome, the so-called champion of austerity, who had once sworn never again to look at profane books, was studying Virgil and Cicero in his solitude, was explaining those authors to his companions, and was thus putting the ideas of the old

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 84, no 8 (to Pammachius and Oceanus). *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 179.

<sup>35</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, Saint Jérôme, art. 98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> P. L., XXI, 541-623.

paganism into the pure souls of the children who had been confided to him to be brought up in the fear of God.

It was a clever apology. That Jerome had altered his views about Origen, that again and again he let invectives flow too readily from his pen, that he did not spare the practices of Christians or the city of Rome or such and such members of the Catholic clergy, that he used to read the classical authors of Greece and Rome in his monastic cell—all these were undeniable facts. Jerome might simply have acknowledged them and explained them, showing that they did not lead to the abominable conclusions which Rufinus claimed to draw from them.

### St. Jerome's Apologia

Jerome preferred to answer a pamphlet by another pamphlet. Considered as a literary product, Jerome's reply, published under the title of *Apologia*, is a masterpiece. Says Thierry: "Rufinus' *Apology* bears the marks of great talent; Jerome's, the stamp of genius." But personalities intrude themselves too often, and the tone is too bitter. Rufinus at the close of his pamphlet said: "I hope that you love peace." Jerome ended his with these words: "If you desire peace, lay down your arms. I can be at peace with one who shows kindness; I do not fear one who threatens me."

So sharp a controversy became a scandal for the Church. Augustine, who heard echoes of it in Hippo, lamented it.<sup>39</sup> At the beginning, Epiphanius appealed to Pope Siricius. But great prudence was required of the papacy in this affair, in which questions of persons were mingled with doctrinal questions. To condemn Origenism would be to give free rein to the audacity of Theophilus, whose antiorigenist campaign was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Apology in Reply to Rufinus (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., III, 482 ff.).

<sup>38</sup> Thierry, Saint Jérôme, bk. 9.

<sup>39</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 73. Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 329.

dominated by human views and feelings more than it was by reasoned conviction. One day he laid hands on a venerable monk, Ammonius by name, who was guilty of giving hospitality to a proscribed priest. This occurred in 399. The same year Pope Siricius died without having made any official decision in the dispute. The following year his successor Anastasius came out clearly against Origen, his writings, and his translator. Steps were then taken to get the imperial sanction of the papal decree. Origen's work was banned from the Empire, on the same ground as the works of Porphyry and Arius. 1

Jerome, in his solitude at Bethlehem, resumed his Scriptural labors. Rufinus, driven from Italy by an invasion of barbarians, withdrew to a corner of Sicily, where he translated into Latin Eusebius' *History*, the *Clementine Recognitions*, the *History of the Monks of Egypt*, and several homilies of the Greek Fathers. He died in 410. The continued friendship of St. Paulinus of Nola for him is a homage to the sincerity of his faith. History may call him imprudent and rash; it has no right to consider him a heretic.<sup>42</sup>

# Theophilus of Alexandria

The storm had scarcely subsided at Jerusalem when a tempest arose at Constantinople. The condemnation of Origenism by the Pope and the Emperor in 400 enormously increased, as might easily have been foreseen, the power of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> St. Jerome, *Letters*, 95 (Pope Anastasius to Simplicianus). *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Jaffé, I, 43 (no. 281); P. L., XX, 68; XLVIII, 231; Mansi, III, 943. Van den Gheyn, in the Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses, IV, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> In 408, two years before Rufinus' death, St. Jerome, who was still quivering at the recollection of Rufinus' invectives against him, wrote a description of him under the name of Grunnius (the Growler), a portrait that would not be out of place in the writings of the greatest satirists. The sharpness of St. Jerome's language calls to mind a saying of Pope Sixtus V. This pope, chancing one day to pass a picture of Jerome striking his breast with a stone, remarked: "You do well to have that stone in your hand, for without it the Church would never have canonized you."

Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria. "He now felt the whole of Egypt behind him, the whole influence of the clergy, and all the enthusiasm of the monks." <sup>43</sup>

A certain number of monks refused to hand over to him the books of Origen which they had in their possession, declaring that they were quite able, by themselves, to discern the true from the false. He inflicted a real persecution on them. His vengeance reached in particular four brothers of lofty stature, known as the Tall Brothers: Dioscorus, Ammonius, Eusebius, and Euthymius. Finally most of the resisters yielded to the terrible Patriarch by means of more or less vague compromises. But the four Tall Brothers remained irreconcilable and determined to demand to the very limit, not only peace, but justice. They set sail with fifty monks and fled to Constantinople.<sup>44</sup>

## St. John Chrysostom

Since 398 the see of Constantinople was occupied by John Chrysostom. His election disappointed the Patriarch of Alexandria, who was hoping to put one of his own creatures in the patriarchal see. The influence which John soon acquired by his zeal and eloquence did but arouse the resentment of his ambitious rival. Soon the new Patriarch was exercising a growing influence over the community of the faithful, and even over the groups of Arians, Novatians, Jews, and barbarians who lived in Constantinople. One day the imperial minister Eutropius, banished by the Emperor and pursued by a mob, found safety only by seeking refuge under the protec-

<sup>43</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Ammonius, Eusebius, and Euthymius were certainly the chiefs of the expedition. Notwithstanding Socrates (VI, 9) and Sozomen (VIII, 13), we are not sure that Dioscorus made the journey with the others.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> On these early days of St. Chrysostom, see Puech, St. John Chrysostom, pp. 115-150.

tion of Chrysostom's pulpit in the Church of Saint Sophia, where nothing but the great Bishop's eloquence was able to rescue him from the people's wrath.<sup>46</sup>

These very successes aroused against the fearless Bishop enmities in high places, such as the hostility of Empress Eudoxia. She was vexed at seeing him place obstacles in the way of the exactions she tried to impose for her own benefit or that of her creatures. The arrival of the Tall Brothers and their companions complicated the situation and soon gave it a tragic turn.

"Chrysostom, like so many great Christians of his time, like St. Basil, like St. Gregory Nazianzen, without sharing the peculiar doctrines of Origen, was among those who admired him. He received the Tall Brothers, but with the necessary prudence, refusing to admit them to communion before having obtained exact information from Alexandria; he only offered them an asylum within the precincts of the Church of the Resurrection. He then began negotiations with Theophilus in the hope of effecting a reconciliation, but failed utterly. The Tall Brethren then conceived the idea of addressing themselves to the Empress; they presented a petition to her, and Eudoxia immediately took their cause in hand. She induced Arcadius to convoke a synod, which was to decide concerning the accusations which Theophilus had caused to be formulated against the Origenists by monks delegated by him for the purpose." <sup>47</sup>

## Synod of the Oak (403)

But Theophilus was on the watch. From Alexandria he followed the affair of Constantinople and prepared to step in at the opportune moment. In the spring of 403, accompanied

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> On this occasion St. Chrysostom preached his famous sermon, on the text: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

<sup>47</sup> Puech, op. cit., p. 155.

by an imposing array of Egyptian bishops, the Patriarch disembarked at Constantinople and, without calling on Chrysostom, presented himself at the imperial palace and succeeded in being installed there. At the end of three weeks he gathered, in the world and at court, from people who felt themselves aggrieved by the Bishop's rebukes, a collection of evidence, of more or less verified rumors, of more or less authentic reports, that he would use in drawing up a formal accusation. Suffragan bishops who had been displeased by their metropolitan, and two deacons whom Chrysostom had deposed, took sides with Theophilus. In short, one day it was learned that in the outskirts of Chalcedon, in a rich villa known as the Villa of the Oak, thirty-six bishops were assembled in council—the Patriarch of Alexandria presiding—with the Emperor's assent, to pass judgment on Chrysostom. The so-called Council violated both legality and fairness: it violated legality, because Theophilus had no right to interfere outside his jurisdiction; it violated fairness, because he seated among the judges four bishops who were known to be personal enemies of Chrysostom and were his chief accusers. The Patriarch of Constantinople, for these two reasons, refused to appear. He also prevented forty bishops, who of their own accord took his side, from holding a separate synod. But the Synod of the Oak went ahead and, upon complaints as numerous as they were groundless, Chrysostom was condemned.48 He was deposed from his see, and the Emperor was asked to pronounce sentence of banishment against him.

### Banishment of St. Chrysostom

Three days later the Bishop, learning that he was to be taken by force and put on board a ship, gave himself up to

<sup>48</sup> The enumeration of these complaints will be found in Puech, op cit., pp. 158 f.

the imperial officer who was appointed to make the arrest. His exile did not last long. The very next night a severe earthquake, that was felt at Constantinople, spread terror. Empress Eudoxia, frightened by what she regarded as an ill omen and also troubled by the aroused feelings of the people, who missed their pastor, urged the return of him whom she had helped to exile. The Patriarch made a triumphal entry into his city.

This was but the first act of the drama. The peace lasted only two months. To console the Empress' pride, the courtiers and ladies of the palace, in the autumn of that year (403) organized a great festival. Its principal ceremony was the inauguration of a statue of Eudoxia in a large public square of the city. Chrysostom denounced this feast vigorously. He was even accused of saying: "Again Herodias raves; she dances again; and again desires to receive John's head in a charger." <sup>49</sup>

This led to another campaign which Theophilus directed without leaving Alexandria. All he needed to do was to supply Eudoxia with the canonical pretext on which she might base a fresh attack upon the Patriarch. Chrysostom was charged with violating the fourth canon of the Council of Antioch (341),50 which forbade a bishop who had been deposed by a council to resume his office. A few days before Easter (404), the Emperor had the Bishop kept under guard in the episcopal palace. On the eve of the feast, armed forces entered the church. The crowd of the faithful, having decided to celebrate the offices elsewhere, were forcibly dispersed. Blood flowed. Soon after, Chrysostom, receiving orders to go into exile, again gave himself up to the officer sent by Arcadius, and set out under a strong escort, not knowing what place of residence was assigned him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Socrates, VI, 18; Sozomen, VIII, 20. On the genuineness of the words attributed to St. Chrysostom, see Puech, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

<sup>50</sup> Hefele, II, 68.

## The Joannites

These measures aroused the people's indignation. Chrysostom's enemies were all among the great and rich. The common people were on his side. The bravest of his followers grouped together and organized. They were called Joannites. Eudoxia, using as pretext a conflagration that in a few hours burned down the Church of Saint Sophia and the Senate Building, had the Joannites prosecuted as being responsible for the disaster and tried to terrify them by bloody repressions. They resisted. The Empress had an old priest, Arsacius, elected to replace Chrysostom. But he governed the Church for a few months only. After his death (November 11, 405), a certain Atticus was chosen. The Joannites would recognize neither Arsacius nor Atticus. They corresponded with the exile, who still considered himself their lawful pastor. Of the letters written by St. Chrysostom during his second exile, about two hundred are extant.51

This correspondence is most touching. Says Villemain: "You can have no true idea of the remarkable life of that time unless you read the letters sent to all parts of the civilized world by Chrysostom, defeated, destitute, a prisoner in his desert. The violent and feeble Empire was dissolving everywhere. But Christian society, united in its dispersion, rising up merely by its own power, and stronger than all the sufferings and schisms, was animated by the same zeal in every quarter of the world. The Christian centers of the East and West felt their enthusiasm grow by the misfortunes of the eloquent pontiff. He still watched over the missions which, in the days of his power, he had sent into Eastern Gothia, Arabia, and idolatrous Persia. By his letters he sustained the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> The extant correspondence of St. Chrysostom contains 238 letters. Most of them are short notes. Nearly all of them were written during his second and third exile. They will be found in *P. G.*, vol. 52.

zeal of the priests evangelizing the barbarians." <sup>52</sup> Chrysostom's great soul is especially revealed in the seventeen letters written to a noble widow, Olympias, who had entered the order of deaconesses. The heart of the exiled Bishop poured itself out freely and appeared as tender as it was brave. Two small writings also date from this exile. One is entitled: Nothing Can Harm him who does not Harm himself. The other is addressed To Those who are Scandalized by the Recent Misfortunes.

### Death of St. Chrysostom

Pope Innocent was made acquainted with the situation by Theophilus and by agents of Chrysostom. He annulled the condemnation of the Bishop of Constantinople made by the Synod of the Oak and wrote a stern letter to the Bishop of Alexandria. Finally he broke off communion with all Chrysostom's enemies. Neither this decision of the Roman Pontiff, however, nor Eudoxia's death about the end of 404 made any notable change in the situation. A bitter rivalry divided the two Emperors. The barbarians kept threatening the frontiers.

Chrysostom, at first brought to the city of Cocussus (Cucusus) on the borders of Cilicia in Lesser Armenia, was conducted, at the end of 407, along the eastern shore of the Black Sea toward the city of Pithysius, perhaps in the hope that, being there so far removed, he would lose some of his tireless energy. His physical strength was exhausted. He traveled slowly. The night of September 13, which he passed in the village of Comana near which the martyr Basiliscus was buried, he heard in a dream the saint saying to him: "Take comfort. Tomorrow we will be together." The next day, after a little more than an hour's march, he fell exhausted. His end

<sup>52</sup> Villemain, L'Eloquence chrétienne au IVe siècle, pp. 200 f.

<sup>53</sup> Jaffé, no. 288.

was near. He asked that he be carried into the chapel built over the martyr's tomb. His last words were these: "Glory be to God for all things." <sup>54</sup>

### Donatism

In the great conflict that had stirred the East, a conflict in which Chrysostom had just died as a victim, the doctrinal question of Origenism faded into the background and then entirely disappeared. But in the West the Donatist schism entered upon a new phase, and the Pelagian heresy was born; the former disturbed society by its uprisings; the latter insinuated itself into men's minds by its sophistry. Both of them encountered the genius of Augustine. That genius was supple and powerful enough to face both the attacks of brutal violence and the niceties of subtle dialectics.

In 396,<sup>55</sup> Valerius, bishop of Hippo, feeling the burden of his labors and advanced age, decided to have a coadjutor. His plan was approved by Aurelius, the primate of Africa. Once this resolve was taken, there was no doubt about the choice of the new bishop. The unanimous vote of the clergy and people named Augustine. He had been a priest for five years <sup>56</sup> and took his venerable bishop's place in the ministry of preaching, fought the heretics, appeared with authority in the councils,

54 The name Chrysostom, by which we have designated the patriarch John of Constantinople, came into use in the seventh century. It is the name used for him by most historians. Not until the Council of the Lateran, in 1215 (Mansi, XXI, 991), did the Roman Church officially acknowledge the title of patriarch as belonging to the bishops of Constantinople. But in the East it was commonly given them from the time of the council of 381. Several phases that we have merely touched upon in the life and works of St. Chrysostom are more fully considered in the following works: Baur, Saint Jean Chrysostome et ses aurres dans l'histoire littéraire; Placide de Meester, La Divine liturgie de saint Jean Chrysostome. Cf. Jugie, Saint Jean Chrysostome et la primauté de saint Pierre, in the Échos d'Orient, XI (1908), 5–15, 193–203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> This is the date accepted by Rauscher and Rottmanner, *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 1898, p. 894.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> He was ordained priest in 391.

published illuminating works on timely and difficult questions, and, in his monastery near the episcopal city, led the strict life of an anchorite. Megalius, primate of Numidia, consecrated him bishop. Shortly afterwards the aged Bishop of Hippo died.

Augustine was forty-two years old. Since his conversion, patient study had made him familiar with the deepest mysteries of Catholic teaching; experience had matured him; the assiduous practice of asceticism had freed him from nearly all the weaknesses of the "old man"; his soul had lost none of its first ardor for making converts; yet it was not without alarm that he entered upon his new office.

The power of the Donatists was formidable in Africa. Their insolence was boundless. Numidia and a large part of Africa were in their hands. At Carthage they had a primate, a rival of the Catholic primate. A short time before Augustine's episcopate, a single sect of the Donatists 57 had been able to send 310 bishops to the Council of Bagai. One of these bishops was the terrible Optatus of Timgad (Thamugadi), reminding us of a Musulman marabout of later times. He journeyed through Numidia and proconsular Africa at the head of armed bands, forcing the Catholics to be rebaptized. In Hippo the Donatist clergy forbade the bakers of their sect to bake bread for Catholics. When Augustine was in the pulpit, his sermons were disturbed by the shouting that came from a Donatist chapel nearby. Sometimes as he passed along the streets, he would be insulted by some Donatist calling out: "Down with the traitor; down with the persecutor!" At times, when he would be rebuking a young man who was disrespectful to father or mother, the young man would answer him:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> The Donatists were by no means in agreement among themselves. They were divided into Urbanists, Claudianists, Rogatists, Maximianists, etc. On the various sects, see Bareille, art. "Donatisme" in the Dictionnaire de théologie, IV, 1710 f.

"Very well, I will become a Donatist." And he would straightway go to the sect and be rebaptized by their priests, who would find him a place in their bands of pillagers.

### St. Augustine and the Schismatics

Against such excesses Augustine had previously thought the only procedure was the practice of charity. "I knew from experience," he said, "how easy it is to be mistaken." In the pulpit he declared: "Brethren, your bishop's voice begs you, all you in this church, to refrain from insulting those who are not here, but rather pray that they enter your communion." At Hippo, at Carthage, in the councils of 397, 401, and 403 he tried to have measures of gentleness and moderation adopted. He wanted especially to find out whether Christian truth, clearly explained and sincerely practiced, might not result in dissipating misunderstandings and bringing back to the Catholic religion those who had gone astray in good faith.

First he published his *Psalmus abecedarius*, a popular refutation, in rhyme, of the Donatist error. Then, in 400, he brought out his *Contra epistolam Parmeniani* in three books, and his *De Baptismo contra donatistas* in seven books. The schismatics declined to answer him. With Christian gentleness he reproached them in his three books *Contra litteras Petiliani*, which appeared between 400 and 402. Yet he provoked them to two public discussions, one oral, the other epistolary, but without success. In vain he proposed a third. His opponents answered him with insults, and their acts of violence increased. While the Bishop of Hippo was preaching peace, the Donatist bishops were preaching war.

One of Augustine's most faithful followers, his future biographer Possidius, bishop of Calama (Guelma), driven into a house by the Donatist bishop Crispinus, sustained a

siege there and barely escaped death in it. Bishop Maximian of Bagai was stabbed while in his basilica, was left for dead. and survived only by a miracle. Augustine himself very narrowly escaped death. In the course of one of his pastoral visitations, along the road where he was to pass, a band of Donatists was posted in ambush to assassinate him. Happily he took the wrong road by mistake and owed his safety to that providential error. "Meanwhile the armed Circumcellions continued to pillage and set fire to farms. They tortured the owners to extort their money. Behind them the Donatist priests invaded the property and the churches of the Catholics. Forthwith they rebaptized the coloni. Then they 'purified' the basilicas, washed the floor with great quantities of water and, after smashing the altar, sprinkled salt over the place where it had stood. The Donatists treated the Catholics like pestridden people. Such deeds cried out for vengeance. Until then Augustine had been averse to asking prosecution by the government. But now he had to yield to the circumstances and to the insistence of his fellow-bishops. Councils held at Carthage called upon the Emperor for exceptional measures against the Donatists, who ridiculed all the laws against heretics. When they were brought to trial, they persuaded the magistrates (who were often pagans incompetent to judge the question) that they really belonged to the only orthodox Church. It was necessary to end any doubts in the matter and once for all bring about the categorical condemnation of the schism." 58

Emperor Honorius, informed of what was happening in Africa, showed some hesitation at first. Two severe laws were enacted in 409, then abrogated the next year, then again put in force.<sup>59</sup> Finally, upon request of the Catholics, who wished to make one last effort at conciliation before resorting to repressive measures, the Emperor gave the tribune Marcellinus

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Bertrand, Saint Augustin, pp. 385 f.

<sup>59</sup> Theodesian Code, XVI, v. 46, 47, 51

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full power to convene Catholics and schismatics in a joint conference.<sup>60</sup>

## Conference of Carthage (411)

The conference took place in Carthage in 411, with Marcellinus presiding. St. Augustine defined the doctrinal point of the dispute. Were they or were they not willing to acknowledge that the Church, as it exists on earth, can include sinners in its membership without losing any of its holiness; that in such case it still remains an efficacious source of sanctification, nourished by the merits of Jesus Christ? Would they or would they not acknowledge that the sacraments, duly administered in the name of the Church, have their proper efficacy, independent of the holiness of the minister conferring them, because they derive their efficacy from Christ? The Donatists, driven by Augustine's argumentation, were obliged to confess that such was the true doctrine and that they themselves had applied it in their dealings with the Maximianists. Thereupon the question was settled. Marcellinus, in the name of the Emperor, decided in favor of the Catholics' contention at all points.61

The logical consequence of this decision was the confiscation, to the profit of the Catholics, of all the religious edifices occupied by the Donatists, and the guilt of heresy for the latter, who were thereby subject to the penalty of prison or exile. But the Catholics, by a generous offer, probably inspired by the Bishop of Hippo, declared that every converted Donatist might retain his see, that wherever the Donatist Church alone represented whatever Christianity remained, it would not be disturbed, and that wherever two bishops (one Donatist

<sup>60</sup> Idem, XVI, 11, 1.

 $<sup>^{61}</sup>$  Most of the documents of this conference will be found in  $P.\ L.$ , vol. XI. See also  $P.\ L.$ , XLIII, 815-842.

and the other Catholic) would remain in the same place, the Catholic one would admit the Donatist to share the honors of the bishopric with him on condition that he would no longer assemble schismatic meetings, that he would suppress the activities of the Circumcellions, in short, that he would conform to the laws regarding heresy.

Numerous conversions resulted from the Conference of Carthage. But the rage of the obstinate Donatists only increased. In the diocese of Hippo they killed a priest (Restitutus) and tortured another priest (Innocent) by plucking out one of his eyes and cutting off one of his fingers. Rigorous measures were then restored. A law of 411 even punished with death those who would take part in Donatist synods. Augustine protested against the severity of the penalties inflicted. He asked that the guilty should not receive capital punishment, but should simply be deprived of the power to do harm and be granted time to do penance. Yet he recognized that for many a mild repression had been a means of salvation. He himself says:

"Many have found advantage (as we have proved, and are daily proving by actual experiment) in being first compelled by fear or pain, so that they might afterwards be influenced by teaching." 65

The Donatist leaders, by every means, tried to keep their followers from reading the writings of the Catholics and, with the force of their authority, deceived them with abominable calumnies. Fear of the imperial sanctions offset the hateful pressure of those tyrannical measures. The misled schismatics could henceforth more easily read the new writings which Augustine published to enlighten them, notably his popular

<sup>62</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 144 (Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 494).

<sup>63</sup> Idem, Letter 133. P. L., XXXIII, 509; Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 470.

<sup>64</sup> Idem, Letters 133, 134, 139.

<sup>65</sup> Idem, Letter 185, chap. 6 (i.e., The Correction of the Donatists). On St. Augustine's tolerance, see Jules Martin, Saint. Augustin, pp. 372-388.

summary of the Conference of 411, under the title of *Breviculus collationis cum donatistis*, and his work *Contra Gaudentium*, which he brought out in 420. The previous year he held a public conference with Emeritus, one of the Donatist orators of Carthage. A report of it has been preserved. <sup>66</sup> The Donatist error gradually disappeared. But the error of Pelagius was already demanding Augustine's active attention.

### The Pelagian Controversy

Among the men of barbarous race who were becoming more numerous at Rome in the ranks of the army, of the magistracy, of the government officials, of the clergy (Catholic and dissenting), about the year 400 there was noticed a monk of considerable stature, 67 and austere morals. 68 He was a great spiritual director who, to aid sinners abandon vice and to lead the good on the path of perfection, appealed to the invincible strength that free will gives us. This monk was the center of a pious circle that called him, from the name of his native country, 69 Brito (the Britain), or the Man of the Sea, the Sailor, Pelagius. His real name was Morgan. Marius Mercator 70 declares that Pelagius obtained his doctrine from a certain Rufinus, a disciple of Theodore of Mopsuestia. But this view is much disputed.<sup>71</sup> It is simpler and truer to consider Pelagius as the representative of a tendency rather common in the West in his day.

The pagan spirit, stripped of its idolatrous beliefs and cere-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Sermo ad Caesareensis ecclesiae plebem Emerito praesente habitus; P. L., XLIII, 689-698.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> St. Augustine, On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, III, 1; Letter 186; Retractations, II, 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> St. Prosper, Carmen de ingratis; St. Jerome, In Jeremiam, bk. 1, preface; bk. 3, preface.

<sup>70</sup> Mercator, Commonitorium, 1 f.

<sup>71</sup> Hergenröther-Kirsch, Kirchengeschichte, vol. I, bk. 2, part 2, chap. 6.

monies, continued under various forms, of which Manichaeism and Pelagianism were the most significant aspects. In the one case man is considered the plaything of two irresistible forces to which he must simply abandon himself without incurring the burden of any responsibility; in the other case he is regarded as the supreme master of his destiny through the choice of his independent will. In both cases, it is still pride. In vain did Christian revelation show in man a will free and responsible, but subject to the supreme authority of God, without whose help it can do nothing profitable for salvation. The pagan tendencies entered the Church itself and became heresies. The Manichaean error, which for a time seduced Augustine's soul, met particular obstacles in the West. Pelagius set himself up as the foe of Manichaean determinism. His doctrine, then, was presented to the Roman world as a revival of Stoicism. It found secret accomplices. They professed to believe in the divinity of Christ, in the Church, in the totality of Catholic dogmas and ceremonies, but they kept their pride to accomplish their salvation by themselves.<sup>72</sup>

Pelagius possessed a vigorous, quick, and acute mind.<sup>73</sup> He accomplished at the same time his labors as spiritual director and the composition of several books. He published, one after the other, a treatise *On the Trinity*, a *Liber capitulorum* or collection of religious texts, a *Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul*, and possibly a work *De induratione cordis Pharaonis*, which was discovered only a few years ago.<sup>74</sup> But it was not from his hand that the exposition of Pelagian doctrine came. Perhaps he merely gave it its general inspiration. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Cicero said: "It is universally agreed that good fortune we must ask of the gods, but wisdom must arise from ourselves." The *Nature of the Gods*, III, 36. St. Jerome considered that the Pelagian errors had their source in the doctrine of the Stoics. (Letter 133, to Ctesiphon; *Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., VI, 272.)

<sup>78</sup> St. Augustine speaks of his ingenium fortissimum, celerrimum et acutissimum. 74 This treatise was discovered by Dom Morin. See Revue bénédictine, XXVI (1909), 163.

spreading of the error and probably its systematic exposition were the work of a former lawyer who, as soon as he made acquaintance with Pelagius' ideas, became their zealous propagator. He was called Caelestius. Contemporaries speak of him as an earnest, daring, loquacious man, and, if not out and out mendacious,<sup>75</sup> at least rather free with the truth.<sup>76</sup>

#### Grace and Free Will

To justify the ascetical doctrine of his master, Caelestius boldly suppressed two traditional dogmas of Catholicism: the dogma of original sin and the dogma of grace. According to him, every man is born with the integrity of his nature and powers. The first man sinned only for himself alone. Nothing of his sin passed on to his descendants, unless his bad example which, if one insisted, might strictly speaking be called the original sin. According to Pelagius and Caelestius, man thus created could, by his own power and without the aid of divine grace, attain supernatural life and win the kingdom of God, unless we are willing to call grace the ensemble of Christ's teaching and examples, or this free will, this spontaneity which God has granted to man without antecedent merit on his part. From these two principles Caelestius derived the following consequences: that the effect of baptism is not to blot out a sin or to free us from a penalty, but solely to affiliate us with the outward society of Christians; secondly, that the Church is nothing more than the society of the just, 77 and that our prayers to God for our brethren or for ourselves are useless. He also held that bodily death is not the consequence of origi-

<sup>75 &</sup>quot;Incredibili loquacitate," says Mercator, Liber subnot., preface, 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> "Iste mendacior, vel certe liberior," says St. Augustine, On Original Sin, chap. 13 (alias 12); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., V, 241.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> According to Pelagius, a venial sin or even a simple imperfection suffices to exclude one from heaven and from the Church. Since all perfection is possible to man, it is of obligation. Like the Stoics, Pelagius recognized no distinction between precept and counsel. See Harnack, *Précis de l'histoire des dogmas*, p. 285.

nal sin, and that Adam would have died even if he had not transgressed God's command.<sup>78</sup>

Augustine did not wait for the first manifestations of Pelagianism before he expressed his ideas about free will, original sin, and grace. As well as Pelagius and Caelestius, and with a power and intensity of feeling that few men have equalled, he affirmed the existence in man of a free will by which, between the contrary solicitations of good and evil, man becomes master of his destiny. No one ever experienced a deeper feeling of the malice of sin, or remorse for sin. But, in his view, what makes sin is free will. "What the soul naturally does not know," he wrote in 390, "or what naturally it cannot do, is never imputed to it as a sin." 79 "Who made the devil? Himself: it is not his nature but his sin that made him a devil." 80 But this clear view of free will did not prevent Augustine from noting the existence of the two great powers that contend for man's heart: concupiscence, the fruit of original sin, and grace, the gift of God. In his book De Genesi, he conceived original sin as a consequence of Adam's pride; in his De diversis quaestionibus he declares, with perfect exactness, that "by original sin human nature sinned in the earthly paradise." 81 Yet he never forgot the powerful solicitations of divine grace, without which "no man can even seek God." 82 In his Confessions, published in 400, he writes: "Lord, give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt, Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis." 83 But the moral attraction of

<sup>78</sup> On these doctrines, see St. Augustine, De Haeresibus, in fine. Cf. Idem, On the Grace of Christ, chaps. 7, 41. Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., vol. V.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> De libero arbitrio, bk. 3, chap. 22, no. 64. This work was written sometime between 388 and 395.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> De Genesi contra Manichaeos, bk. 2, chap. 28, no. 42. This work was written at Tagaste sometime between 388 and 390. Cf. Jules Martin, Saint Augustin, pp. 207 ff. <sup>81</sup> De diversis quaestionibus, q. 66, no. 7.

<sup>82 &</sup>quot;Deum nemo quaerit, nisi admonitur." Solil., bk. 1, chap. 1, no. 23. The Soliloquies was written in 387.

<sup>83</sup> Confessions, bk. 10, chap. 29.

grace, acting upon man, did not in any way, according to him, lessen man's power of action. Quite to the contrary. As he himself says later: "They are acted upon that they may act, not that they may themselves do nothing. Aguntur ut agant, et non ut ipsi nihil agant." 84

The whole subject of his *Confessions* is the drama of man's free will set in motion by solicitations from above and by those from below.

"Too late came I to love thee, O thou Beauty, both so ancient and so fresh, yea too late came I to love thee. And behold, thou wert within me, and I out of myself, where I made search for thee. . . . I tasted thee, and now do hunger and thirst after thee; thou didst touch me, and I even burn again to enjoy thy peace." 85

It was at Rome, upon hearing a bishop quote Augustine's words, "Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt," that Pelagius, according to his own statement, protested for the first time against a doctrine that he considered destructive of free will. The dispute, however, did not break out just then. The taking of the city in 410 by Alaric's forces obliged the two heresiarchs to flee. They went to Africa, where Caelestius remained. Pelagius then set out for Jerusalem. He would there encounter Jerome, while Caelestius in Africa would find himself face to face with Augustine.

### Pelagius in Palestine

Pelagius had in mind to establish the center of his activity in Palestine, in an atmosphere that seemed to him apt to accept the inspirations of his strict asceticism. At Rome he had already made the acquaintance of the illustrious widow Melania

<sup>84</sup> On Rebuke and Grace, chap. 2 (alias 4); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., V, 473.

<sup>85</sup> Confessions, bk. 10, chap. 27.

<sup>86</sup> On the Gift of Perseverance, chap. 53 (alias 20); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., V, 547.

and several members of the Probi family. He thought these relations would assure him of Jerome's good will. But he underestimated the wonderful acuteness of the great solitary's Catholic sense.

Jerome, for the enlightenment of his judgment, had only a few vague rumors and a few ably calculated conversations with the newcomer. But these were enough to enable him to see through the heresiarch. As Jerome says in one of his letters:

"If God's grace is limited to this that He formed us with wills of our own, and if we are to rest content with free will, not seeking the divine aid lest this should be impaired, we should cease to pray; for we cannot entreat God's mercy to give us daily what is already in our hands, having been given to us once for all. . . . Away with fasting, away with every form of self-restraint! For why need I strive to win by toil what has once for all been placed within my reach?" 87

He thus exposed the error in its most disastrous consequence.

### Caelestius in Africa

Caelestius established himself at Carthage and at once assumed a belligerent attitude. With the ability of a crafty lawyer, he centered the dispute upon the point which he thought was the most vulnerable in Augustine's doctrine. He said: "How can one hold that death is a consequence of Adam's sin? Is not mortality a condition of our nature?" But a priest, who was a native of Milan and former disciple of St. Ambrose, named Paulinus, succeeded, by his adroit argumentation, in making Caelestius confess the basis of his heresy. When this priest remarked that, according to Catholic doctrine, original sin merely deprived the first man and his

<sup>87</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 133, no. 5 (to Ctesiphon); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 275.

descendants of an immortality attached to their supernatural vocation, Caelestius was led to deny both the existence of that supernatural vocation and the possibility of the transmission of a penalty by the offense of a single man. The heresy was evident. Paulinus denounced the heretic to Aurelius bishop of Carthage, who, in 411, convoked a council in his episcopal city to pass judgment on the question. It condemned Caelestius. On his refusal to retract, he was excommunicated.<sup>88</sup>

Augustine did not attend this Council, which was held outside his province (the province of Numidia). Moreover, he hesitated to attack Pelagius, who had been mentioned to him in terms of great praise, <sup>89</sup> and who, upon arriving in Africa, had written him a respectful letter. <sup>90</sup> But, urged by his faithful, he decided to refute the new errors in three writings. The first two appeared in 412, the third in 415. They are the *De peccatorum meritis*, the *De spiritu et littera*, and the *De perfectione justitiae*. Out of consideration for Pelagius, he did not mention him by name. <sup>91</sup> At the same time he sent one of his friends, Paulus Orosius, to Palestine to assist Jerome in his strife against the dangerous innovator.

### Paulus Orosius

Paulus Orosius, a Spanish priest, cannot be ranked among those eminent men whom the Church recognizes as doctors or masters. Rather he appears to us as one of those men who are born disciples. Though not capable of original ideas or daring initiative, they can, when they devote themselves to the service of a great man, render priceless aid to his cause. Obliged to leave Spain because of some threatening danger, which he alludes to without being specific, he took ship and reached the

<sup>88</sup> Mercator, Commonitorium, P. L., XLVIII, 69.

<sup>89</sup> St. Augustine, On the Proceedings of Pelagius, chap. 46 (alias 22).

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., chap. 51 (alias 26).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., chap. 47 (alias 23).

coast of Africa. At once he attached himself to Augustine. It is to Orosius' solicitations that we owe St. Augustine's treatise *Contra Priscillianistas ad Orosium*. <sup>92</sup> His chief claim to authorship is a *Universal History* which he later wrote at St. Augustine's request as a complementary work to the *City of God*. <sup>93</sup> Paulus Orosius, by his intelligent activity, brought valuable assistance to the cause of orthodoxy in the Pelagian controversy.

## Dispute between St. Jerome and St. Augustine

Orosius' mission was destined to render a more personal service to Augustine and Jerome. It brought about a reconciliation between them which both of them had been long desiring. In fact, a protracted and painful disagreement, arising from a Scriptural interpretation, divided these two great men for almost ten years.

In 395, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, Jerome, trying to explain the dispute at Antioch between St. Peter and St. Paul,<sup>94</sup> considered it as a scene agreed upon by the two Apostles, to repress, by a striking example, the intolerable claims of the Judaizers.<sup>95</sup> This interpretation shocked the Bishop of Hippo, who very frankly wrote to Jerome as follows:

"I have been reading some writings, ascribed to you, on the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. . . . To find there the defense of falsehood undertaken, whether by you, a man of such weight, or by any author (if it is the writing of another), causes me, I must confess, great sorrow. . . . If you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one false statement as made in the way of

<sup>92</sup> Leclercq, L'Espagne chrétienne, p. 201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 265. Cf. Boissier, La Fin du paganisme, XII, 314. The title of the work is Historia adversus paganos.

<sup>94</sup> Gal. 2: 11-14.

<sup>95</sup> In Epistolam ad Galatas, I, 2.

duty, there will not be left a single sentence of those books which, if appearing to any one difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away as a statement in which, intentionally and under a sense of duty, the author declared what was not true." <sup>96</sup>

Not receiving a reply to this first letter, Augustine wrote a second, no less spirited.<sup>97</sup> The Palestinian hermit hesitated to reply. It was distasteful to him, as he said later, to engage in controversy with a bishop of his communion, with a bishop whose talent and virtues he so highly esteemed. It may be, too, that, knowing the unrestrained petulancy of his own character, he was afraid he might indulge in some of those excesses of language for which he had often been reproached.

But when he learned that Augustine's first letter in its round-about course had passed from hand to hand and been widely read and commented on, the old fighter could not contain his displeasure.

"I am not so foolish," he wrote to the young bishop, "as to think myself insulted by the fact that you give an explanation different from mine. . . . Do not because you are young challenge a veteran in the field of Scripture. . . . Lest it should seem that to quote from the poets is a thing which you alone can do, let me remind you of the encounter between Dares and Entellus, and of the proverb, "The tired ox treads with a firmer step." "98

Augustine replied mildly and respectfully, but still insisting upon his objection. For ten years the correspondence between these two great men was marked with a sharpness which was tempered as much as possible by the charity of Christ but which was kept acute by fresh clashes, inevitable between characters so unlike, although both were animated by the same

<sup>96</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 28 (to Jerome); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 251.

<sup>97</sup> Letter 67 (apud Epistolas Hieronymi, 7).

<sup>98</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 102; Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 324.

love of Christ. In this painful dispute additional fuel was supplied by Jerome's Latin translation of the Bible and the difficulties which the Bishop of Hippo encountered in it.

Ten years of silence passed. Yet both men were hoping for a full and entire reconciliation. Orosius' mission in Palestine in 415 was its occasion. Augustine's messenger was the bearer of letters in which the African bishop questioned the venerable hermit about various matters of exegesis and philosophy, the solution of which was made particularly important by the Pelagian controversy. Paulus Orosius had the joy of seeing that Jerome was glad to collaborate in Augustine's apologetical work. It was also evident that Jerome, profoundly admiring the recent books of the Bishop of Hippo, hoped that Augustine, whose letters had of old wounded him, would be the illustrious continuator of his own great Scriptural works. From that hour until Jerome's death five years later, the collaboration of these two geniuses was cordial and constant.

## Pelagius in the East

The strife against the Pelagian error required, however, the united efforts of the Catholics. Pelagius, condemned by a Western council, came to the East looking for other support, consecrating, as it were, his person and his ideas at the Holy Places, and probably hoping to set the mighty name of Jerusalem against that of Rome. Success seemed to him the more likely since many of the holy women living in retirement in the Holy City were friendly to him and since Bishop John of Jerusalem, who was animated by a secret rivalry against Jerome and his monasteries, had promised Pelagius his protection.

But, in fighting him, Jerome no longer felt he was alone. In that very year (415) when he received the message of Orosius, he published three dialogues against the innovator. Therein, after appealing to the testimony of Holy Writ and the liturgy, he says:

"That holy man and eloquent bishop Augustine not long ago wrote two treatises on infant baptism, in opposition to your heresy. And he is said to have others on the anvil with special regard to you, which have not yet come to hand. Wherefore, I think I must abandon my task, for fear Horace's words may be thrown at me, 'Don't carry firewood into a forest.' . . . If we wished to say something fresh, we should find our best points anticipated by that splendid genius." 100

The principal argument which Augustine and Jerome employed against Pelagius to prove the existence of original sin was a fact which by itself refuted his whole doctrine: this fact was the traditional, immemorial practice of infant baptism.

"The baptism of infants, like that of adults, was considered as involving remission of sin, in remissionem peccatorum. The sin of the new-born not being capable of being a sin of will, must necessarily be a sin of nature. This very simple reasoning, based on the Symbolum Fidei and on the institutions of the Church, established, as against Caelestius and his party, not only the original downfall, but original sin." <sup>101</sup>

## Council of Jerusalem (415)

After Augustine and Jerome, Orosius also advanced this invincible argument along with many others. The new errors were losing ground. To put an end to the disturbance, John of Jerusalem convoked an assembly of the clergy, which met in July, 415. Jerome, whom they probably dreaded, was not invited. But Orosius and Pelagius were there. The former,

<sup>99</sup> Dialogue against the Pelagians.

<sup>100</sup> Idem, III, 19. Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VI, 482.

<sup>101</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 149.

with all the zeal of his youth and the warmth of his enthusiasm for his two masters, Jerome and Augustine, recalled how Pelagius had been refuted by those great doctors, while Caelestius had been condemned by a council of Carthage. Pelagius was ambiguous in his defense. But in his contempt for the Bishop of Hippo he showed his effrontery. "What does this Augustine matter to me?" he declared. And John of Jerusalem proclaimed: "It is I who am Augustine." It appears that by this he wished to arrogate to himself the right to pardon Pelagius for his impertinence. But the imprudent bishop thus drew upon himself this thrust from Orosius: "If you are Augustine, follow Augustine's doctrine." John of Jerusalem refrained from condemning Pelagius by having the assembly decide that, since the parties—Pelagius and Orosius—were from a Latin country, the case must be carried to Rome.

### Council of Diospolis (415)

Soon the dispute was reopened in Palestine by the acts of two Gallic bishops (Heros of Arles and Lazarus of Aix) who had been driven out of their country and came on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. They denounced the heresy of Pelagius and Caelestius to Eulogius the bishop of Caesarea. Following this denunciation, fourteen bishops, assembled at Diospolis, the ancient Lydda, summoned Pelagius before them. By means of clever suppressions and captious sophisms, he escaped excommunication. But his teaching was condemned. Hence have arisen varied estimates of the Council of Diospolis. St. Augustine appealed to its authority against Julian bishop of Eclanum, whereas St. Jerome called it a wretched synod (miserabilis synodus). 104

<sup>102</sup> Hefele, II, 450 ff.

<sup>103</sup> St. Augustine, Contra Julianum, I, 32.

<sup>104</sup> St. Jerome, Letter 143; Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., I, 557.

### Progress of Pelagianism

Pelagius had not, in any respect, disavowed a heresy that was spreading both in the West and in the East. Theodore of Mopsuestia, the teacher of Nestorius, favored it, even wrote against Jerome a book which he subsequently destroyed. The originator of the heresy which would lower Christ to the rank of a human person, instinctively favored a heresy that denied the divine efficacy of grace. "The practical naturalism of the Western heretics and the speculative rationalism of the East were drawn to each other." <sup>106</sup>

Pelagianism gained ground and became violent. Bands of desperate characters, like those who entered the service of the Donatist heresy, engaged in incredible outrages. St. Augustine relates that one night in the year 416 the monks and nuns living in Bethlehem under Jerome's guidance were attacked by these lawless fanatics. A deacon was slain; the monastery buildings were set on fire, and Jerome escaped death only by fleeing to a tower. The Bishop of Jerusalem had done nothing to prevent this disaster and seemed to take no steps to repair it. Jerome thought the time had come to address his complaints to the Pope, and, through the metropolitan of Carthage, informed him of the events that had just occurred.

### Councils of Carthage and Mileve (416)

Just then the Bishop of Carthage was presiding over a council of seventy-three bishops, who, being informed of the events in Palestine by Heros and Lazarus, repeated the excommunication against Caelestius and Pelagius. Shortly afterwards a council of sixty bishops, held at Mileve under the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Largent, Études d'histoire ecclésiastique. Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie, p. 17. <sup>106</sup> St. Augustine, On the Proceedings of Pelagius, chap. 66 (alias 34); P. L., XLIV, 358.

presidency of Augustine and acquainted with the happenings in Palestine by Orosius, reached a similar decision. Almost at the same time Pope Innocent I received Jerome's letter, the synodal letters of the two African councils, and another letter signed by Augustine and four bishops of Africa explaining the situation in greater detail.

The Sovereign Pontiff's reply came without long delay. On January 27, 417, after examining the matter in a Roman synod, Pope Innocent solemnly ratified the decisions taken by the African councils against the Pelagian heresy and its authors. Upon receipt of the Pope's reply, Augustine declared: "About this affair two councils have been sent to the Apostolic See. The replies have arrived. The case is finished. May the error likewise be ended." 107

## Pope Zosimus and the Pelagians

But all this merely ended the first phase of the dispute. Augustine did not take into acount the craftiness of Pelagius who had despatched an ambiguous profession of faith to the Holy See. Caelestius, having fled to Rome after being expelled from Ephesus, and having been condemned at Constantinople, employed the same procedure. John of Jerusalem was dead. But the first act of his successor, Prailus, was to send to Rome an apology of Pelagius. When these documents reached Rome, Pope Innocent had been succeeded by Zosimus (March 18, 417). It seems that, at the outset of his pontificate, Pope Zosimus fell under the influence of a person somewhat suspect, Patroclus, bishop of Arles. Patroclus, elected in the place of Heros after the latter's banishment, painted him in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Idem, Sermon 131, no. 10. The above is the authentic form of the maxim so often quoted as, "Roma locuta est, causa finita est."

<sup>108</sup> Libellus fidei Pelagii; P. L., XLV, 1715 f.

<sup>109</sup> P. L., XLV, 1718.

<sup>110</sup> Duchesne, Fastes épiscopaux de l'ancienne Gaule, I, 95 f.

the blackest colors, as he did also Lazarus bishop of Aix. Heros and Lazarus had been the chief denouncers of the heresiarchs before the councils. Everything conspired to dispose Zosimus in favor of Pelagius and Caelestius. At Rome the Pope subjected Caelestius to questioning, at which the latter showed no hesitation in condemning whatever the Pontiff condemned, and thus succeeded in deceiving him. Two letters from Zosimus to the bishops of Africa blamed them for their haste and asked them to send the accusers of Caelestius and Pelagius to Rome.<sup>111</sup>

### Council of Carthage (418)

Augustine was placed in a delicate position. The problem was to reconcile the respect and obedience due the supreme pastor of the Church with the steps that were necessary to undeceive him of his error. The bishops of Africa assembled without delay and drew up a long letter denouncing the knavery of Caelestius and begging Zosimus to return to the decisions of Innocent I. This document, probably accompanied by other declarations, made the Pope reflect. On March 21, 418, he declared in a letter that he decided to leave everything as it was. The papal document reached Carthage on April 29. Two days later, a general African council opened in that city. All the provinces of Africa and Spain sent delegates. No less than two hundred bishops attended. They drew up eight canons 114 against the Pelagian doctrine.

## Pope Zosimus Condemns Pelagianism

Meanwhile Zosimus at last perceived the trickery of Caelestius, who was summoned to appear before the Pope. Instead

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> P. L., XLV, 1719–1723.

<sup>112</sup> P. L., XLV, 1725 f.; Jaffé, no. 342.

<sup>113</sup> Hefele, II, 458.

<sup>114</sup> Some documents give nine canons.

of doing so, he fled from Rome. The Pontiff then wrote a long circular letter, addressed to all the bishops of the Christian world, condemning the two heretics and their teaching. This important document is known under the name of *Tractoria*. We possess fragments of it in St. Augustine's works. <sup>115</sup> From the writings of St. Prosper we know the Pope defined in particular the dogma of original sin and that of the necessity of grace for every good act. <sup>116</sup>

The letter was received in Africa with demonstrations of joy. Nearly all the Churches of the Catholic world subscribed to it. 117 From that hour Pelagius and Caelestius disappeared almost entirely from the scene, and St. Augustine prepared, by new works, to enlighten men's minds regarding the harmful heresy.

## Julian, Bishop of Eclanum

At this time a man highly regarded for his fine culture and, as a bishop, held in great esteem for his virtues, Julian of Eclanum, 118 of a sudden rose up against the Bishop of Hippo and charged him, Augustine, with being a twofold heretic. According to Julian, Augustine was heretical in the explanation he advanced to justify the transmission of original sin; and also in his admission of a principle of evil in the human soul. Thus the Bishop of Hippo was accused of Traducianism 119 and Manichaeism. At the same time Julian set forth a

<sup>115</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 190 (alias 152). Cf. Letter 201.

<sup>116</sup> St. Prosper, Contra Collatorem, P. L., XLV, 1730 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> "Per totum orbem missa, subscriptionibus sanctorum Patrum est roborata," says Marius Mercator. Cf. Hergenröther-Kirsch, Kirchengeschichte, vol. I, bk. 2, part 2, chap. 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Eclanum or Eclane, now Mirabella, was a city of Italy located southeast of Beneventum.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> This theory is that human souls are not created directly by God, but are engendered by the parents' spiritual nature in the act of generation, as is the human body.

clever and learned exposition of Pelagius' system. If, to give Pelagianism a new life and expansion, it would have sufficed to possess a keen, lively mind, to handle Aristotelian dialectics masterfully, and to display unwearied activity in defending its ideas, Julian of Eclanum would have succeeded in the task.

But the Pelagian heresy was definitely discredited in people's minds. Julian's only accomplishment was to win to his cause seventeen Italian bishops who, along with him, refused to sign the *Tractoria*. They were at once canonically deposed by the Pope, and banished from the Empire by the Emperor. But in his exile Julian wrote pamphlet after pamphlet against Augustine. The saintly Bishop of Hippo, during the remaining twelve years of his life, had to strive unceasingly against Julian. The dispute was especially in the intellectual order; we may well suppose that, if he had not to deal with so keen an adversary, St. Augustine would not have given us so profound a theory regarding the economy of the supernatural life as that which won for him the title of doctor of grace.

### St. Augustine's Doctrine of Grace

The reader must not expect to find here an exposition of all the questions illumined by St. Augustine's genius in the course of his many polemics. We will merely set forth in summary the doctrine in which his thought is affirmed most forcefully and personally. After defending free will against the Manichaeans, and grace against the Pelagians, he synthesized these two truths by a profound explanation. Of this explanation we find no trace in the writings of his predecessors; but all his successors have made use of it. From it the Catholic Church has taken her formulas for defining the

<sup>120</sup> This is set forth in Tixeront, History of Dogmas, II, 352-505, and Portalié, art. "Augustin" in the Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 2268-2472. Cf. Martin, Saint Augustin.

dogma, and the heretics have appealed to it in support of their errors.

According to St. Augustine, as in the natural order the divine concursus envelops man and penetrates him in his acts, his life, and his being, 121 so in the supernatural order grace envelops and penetrates all his salutary activity. It is necessary for faith, necessary for practice, necessary for perseverance. It is both at the origin of our supernatural acts and at their last crowning. But man's free will is by no means annihilated or lessened by this action of grace. 122 On this point he carefully distinguishes the fact from the explanation of the fact. The fact is beyond dispute. The awareness of free choice, the awareness of merit and demerit are psychological facts that cannot be called into question. St. Augustine declared this against the Manichaeans, and maintained it in the face of the Pelagians. The spiritual life is the free cooperation of man's will with God's grace. It is the meeting and union of two loves: the love of God for man, and that of man for God. As to the explanation of this fact, St. Augustine does not hope to furnish an intellectual demonstration of it that removes the mystery. His profound analyses of divine knowledge and of human intellect and will throw light on the problem; 123 but after these efforts of his reason, he repeats that love alone understands the mysteries of love. He says: "Give me one who loves, and he will understand what I say." 124 No one has pushed the power of reason and of intellectual intuition further than he has.

"Nor does he appear unconscious of the fact that his utterances fall short of the truth which they should express, that divine mys-

<sup>121</sup> Following St. Paul's words: "In Ipso vivinus, movemur et sumus."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> The Pelagian controversy was about actual grace. We are not sure what doctrine he held about habitual grace.

<sup>123</sup> See a sketch of these analyses in Portalié, Dictionnaire de théologie, I, 2389 f.

<sup>124</sup> St. Augustine, On the Gospel of St. John, tractate 26, no. 4; Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., VII, 169.

tery cannot be encompassed in human formulas, and that consequently some room must be left in Christianity for the aspirations of piety and the intuitions of the heart." <sup>125</sup>

## St. Augustine as Bishop

Augustine did not, for the sake of purely speculative studies, neglect the practical duties of his office as bishop. While he was fighting the Manichaeans, Donatists, and Pelagians, he administered his diocese as a most zealous pastor and introduced the monastic life into Africa.

Two heavy burdens weighed on the bishops of that time: the administration of the many properties of the Church and the exercise of important judiciary functions.

"By a cruel irony, Augustine, who had made a vow of poverty and had given his patrimony to the poor, Augustine, elected bishop of Hippo, became the proprietor of extensive possessions. The people of that time wanted the Church to be wealthy because they were the first to profit from that wealth, which consisted chiefly of houses and land. The diocese of Hippo had the administration of numerous houses and immense lands, on which lived a whole population of artisans and freed slaves, farm laborers and artists, metal-founders, embroiderers, silversmiths. Augustine, no doubt, had managers under his orders. But that did not dispense him from entering into the details of the administration and overseeing his agents." 126 Numberless indications, allusions, and rural comparisons, to be found in his sermons, prove that nothing was foreign to Augustine in the management of an estate, in the life of peasants and workmen. We observe that he knew

<sup>125</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., II, 354. Cf. Paquier, Le Jansénisme, lesson 2: "La Théologie de la grace dans St. Augustin," pp. 37-79. Cf. Gaillard, Études sur l'histoire de la doctrine de la grace, pp. 1-89.

<sup>126</sup> Bertrand, Saint Augustin, p. 332.

the forms of sale and of gift, that he was informed about the working of mills and presses.

"Among the episcopal functions was one that wearied Augustine to the point of disgust. Every day he must hear litigants and pass sentence. In the secretarium of the basilica or in the porch of the courtyard adjoining the church, Augustine would hold court. Quite rightly Theodosius extended the juridical competence of bishops in civil cases. Day after day Augustine heard cases until his dinner hour, sometimes, when he was fasting, all day long. As soon as he appeared, wranglers rushed to him tumultuously, surrounded him, pressed on him, and constrained him to consider their cases. Augustine yielded. But the next day, in a spirited sermon, he would say to them: "Discedite a me maligni! Depart from, you wicked ones, and let me study the commandments of my God." 127 "I can declare upon my soul," he said, "that, if I were to consult my personal convenience, I would much prefer, at certain hours of the day, as they do in well-regulated monasteries, to engage in some manual labor, and have the rest of the time free to read, pray, and meditate on the divine writings."

So far as the duties of his episcopal office allowed, the holy Bishop led the life of a monk. In 388, being then a layman, he had turned his patrimonial house into a monastery. After his ordination to the priesthood (391) he founded a second community of monks at Hippo. As bishop he led a veritable religious life along with all his clergy. His example was contagious. The episcopal residence in Hippo became a nursery of founders, who soon covered Africa with monasteries. In Possidius 128 we read the edifying examples of poverty, simplicity, charity, and austerity of life which the holy Bishop gave his clergy. Under his influence, virgins and widows also united in communities. For them he wrote, in 423, his famous

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., pp. 335 f.

<sup>128</sup> Possidius, Vita Augustini, 22.

letter which thereafter was regarded as a rule for religious communities. 129

The Rule of St. Augustine has exercised a notable influence on the monastic life in the West. It served as a basis for a large number of monastic institutions and was one of the sources from which St. Benedict derived the spirit of his rule. It is not the least glory of the monastic order that it can consider as one of its fathers him whom Bossuet calls "the most eminent of all the doctors," 180 "the greatest light of the Church." 181

#### St. Honoratus

With the expansion of monastic life in Africa, there corresponded a flourishing development of monastic life in Gaul. In 410, a Roman nobleman of consular family reached a group of rocky islands that are near the coast of Provence, opposite what is now the city of Cannes. One of these islands he chose as a place where he might lead a life of prayer and study with a few friends. This island, which would later bear the name of the illustrious ascetic, Honoratus, in the time of the Romans was called Lerina (Lerins). Possessing wells of fresh water, it had in former times, according to Strabo, been dotted with habitations. About the beginning of the fifth cen-

<sup>129</sup> St. Augustine, Letter 221; P. L., XXXIII, 960-965. There have been lengthy discussions as to whether St. Augustine founded an order of monks or a congregation of canons regular. He probably was little concerned with these distinctions, and all priests and laymen living in community in the practice of the evangelical counsels have a right to consider him their patron. On the curious discussions that have arisen over this question, see Chevalier, Bio-bibliographie, under the heading "Augustin."

<sup>130</sup> Bossuet, Letter to Leibniz, August 17, 1701. At the annual public meeting of the Académie des Inscriptions (November 15, 1913), Paul Monceaux read a paper on Un Couvent de femmes à Hippone au temps de saint Augustin. It is a scholarly and interesting account of the famous "Rule of St. Augustine," as carried out under the direction of St. Augustine himself.

<sup>131</sup> Bossuet, Sermon for Pentecost, 1654 (Lebarcq-Levesque ed., I, 552).

tury it was a desert. But Honoratus and his companions were austere monks and also tireless workers. Soon the appearance of the island was changed. Saint Eucherius describes its fertile, well-watered fields, adorned with flowers, fragrant with their perfume. 132 St. Hilary of Arles speaks of the venerable ascetic receiving, with a smile on his majestic features, sons of every land who came there to love Christ. 133 The wonders of the Thebaid were reënacted on the shores of Provence. The monastery of Lerins became a celebrated school of theology and Christian philosophy, and a nursery of bishops and saints for the upbuilding of Gaul, Ireland, and England. Among them are reckoned the following: Hilary of Arles, to whom we owe the first biography of St. Honoratus; Vincent of Lerins, the leading controversialist of his time; Lupus (or Loup), who stopped Attila at the gates of Troves: Salvian, who was regarded as the most eloquent man of his age next to Augustine.134

### St. Cassian

The Lerins monastery soon had a rival on the shores of Provence, the monastery of St. Victor at Marseilles. The latter was founded in 415 by the illustrious John Cassian, whom some historians say was born in Scythia, others in Syria or in Provence. His literary culture was profound and extensive. While still a youth, he vowed himself to the monastic state in a monastery at Bethlehem. The disturbances at the close of the fourth century obliged him to leave Palestine and go to the deserts of the Thebaid, where he studied the

<sup>132</sup> St. Eucherius, De laude eremi.

<sup>138</sup> St. Hilary, Vita sancti Honorati.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Recent studies on the so-called Creed of St. Athanasius show the existence of undoubted connection between that Creed and the School of Lerins. See Dom Morin in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XII (1911), and Paul Lejay, *Bulletin d'ancienne littérature*, 1912, pp. 45 f.

<sup>195</sup> See Godet, art. "Cassien" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, II, 1823 f.

cenobitical life and became thoroughly familiar with it. In 401 we find him in Constantinople, imbuing himself with the spirit of St. Chrysostom; in 415 he was in Rome, whither he had come, in the name of the faithful clergy of Constantinople, to seek Pope Innocent's protection over the proscribed bishop. Having accomplished his mission, he stopped at Marseilles and there, over the tomb of St. Victor, a Roman officer who died for the faith at the end of the third century, he built a monastery in honor of the martyr. This monastery, like that of Lerins, would become, in the midst of the barbarian invasions, a citadel of peace, a center of intellectual life.

For the edification of his monks, Cassian wrote, between 419 and 439, two works that have won for him the title of "lawmaker of the monastic life"; the *Institutiones* and the *Collationes* (Conferences). The former of these works sets forth especially the external discipline of the monasteries, according to what the author saw in his travels. The second, his masterpiece, deals with questions that concern the interior life of the monks. St. Benedict, in his rule, obliged his disciples to read the *Conferences*. The Greek Church, the diocese of Marseilles, and that of Digne, honor the memory of St. Cassian.

### Spiritual Writers

The growth of the monastic life has nearly always been accompanied by a literary movement and a general development of the spiritual life. Around the chief work of Cassian, we find the following: a collection of monastic biographies published in 420 in Greek by Bishop Palladius and known as the *Lausiac History*, from the name of Lausus, an eminent personage to whom it was dedicated; the writings of St. Nilus on various subjects of piety; those of St. Eucherius and

<sup>136</sup> St. Benedict, Monastic Rule, 73.

Marcus the Hermit; and anonymous collections. These writings spread, among the monks and the laity also, the rules of a strict and prudent asceticism.<sup>137</sup>

At times these teachings took the form of poetry, as we have seen in the writings of St. Paulinus of Nola. The historian Evagrius mentions two Christian poets of this period in the East: Claudianus and Cyrus, about whom we know very little. The writings of three Western poets—the rhetorician Endelechus (a friend of St. Paulinus), the rhetorician Marius Victor of Marseilles, and the priest Sedulius, whose native country is unknown—show us an evidence of classical culture in the Gallic country. From Sedulius the Church has taken, for her liturgy, the Christmas hymn A solis ortus cardine and the Epiphany hymn Hostis Herodis impie. 138

The foremost of the Christian poets of this period is Prudentius. He was born in 348 in a city of northern Spain, probably Saragossa. He became a lawyer, then a high official in the imperial government. When fifty-seven years old he determined to consecrate all the rest of his life to God alone. In 404 or 405 appeared his poetical work. It is made up of two distinct parts: didactic poems in hexameter, and lyric poems in which we see how thoroughly he had grasped all the forms of the versification of the ancients.

"The two characteristics of his poetry were gracefulness and force; the former appeared especially in passages wherein he showed the earth pouring forth her flowers to surround and veil the cradle of the Savior; or where he described the Holy Innocents as the flowers of martyrdom whom the sword had reaped as the whirlwind reaps the budding roses, and who play as children in heaven, and under the very altar of God, with their palm and their crown. . . . But the power of the poet appeared far more when he described the conflicts of the martyrs; and he caught, as it were, all their fire when

<sup>137</sup> On these various writings, see Bardenhewer, op. cit., pp. 515 ff.

<sup>138</sup> Ibidem, p. 450.

he represented St. Fructuosus on the pile, St. Hippolytus at the heels of the untamed horses, or St. Lawrence on the gridiron." <sup>139</sup>

If we consider the greatness of the spectacle witnessed by the fourth and fifth centuries and the depth of the feelings that shook and transformed men's souls, we may think the poetry of that period rather weak. But, as Saint-Marc Girardin remarks, the spectacle may have been too close and the feelings too strong to stir up great poetical works at the time. The period had heroes and martyrs; it had few great poets. Between feelings and inspiration there must be an interval. A few centuries will mature the fertility of Christian poetry and Christian art.

<sup>189</sup> Ozanam, History of Civilization in the Fifth Century, II, 197.

#### CHAPTER II

## From the Coming of Valentinian III to the Death of Pope Sixtus III (425-440)

The taking of Rome by Alaric in 410 made a deep impression. It made men aware of the greatness of a danger that had been too long ignored. The barbarians' triumph was so quick because everywhere they were able to obtain secret information. The army, the magistracy, the court, all were peopled with Heruli, Vandals, Goths. The Western Empire felt itself done for, submerged by the tide of an invasion the more formidable because it took place, not by violent shocks, but by a slow, assured advance, that was scarcely felt. The confidence of the barbarians was stirred. In 425 the Western Empire had barely half a century to live. Fifty-one years later the last of the Caesars surrendered his power, without shock or clamor, to the insignificant chief of a foreign horde.

The Christian centers of the West shared the universal anguish. It was to reassure them that St. Augustine and Salvian wrote, from different points of view, the one his City of God, the other his book On the Government of God. And theological disputes subsided.

Conditions were quite otherwise in the East. The political situation there, while imperiled, was not so near a collapse. What old Rome lost in prestige, Constantinople gained by its splendor. The intellectual movement centered in that part of the civilized world, and there spirited disputes arose in which the civil authorities took part. This was an old habit with them. And this interference more than once gave the events a tragic character.

## The Roman World in 425

At the death of Honorius in 423, a secretary of State, by the name of John, usurped the title of Emperor. When opposed by Theodosius II (the Younger), he tried to arouse the barbarians in his favor and perished miserably in 425. The armed forces of Theodosius then brought to Italy a grandson of Theodosius the Great, Valentinian III. But the young prince was a mere six-year-old boy. His mother Placidia governed the West in his name. But no woman, guardian of a child, was able successfully to confront the mighty dangers threatening the Empire. From Gaul to Pannonia, from Roman Germany to Africa, the barbarians kept going back and forth.

Around the regent, generals were plotting. One of them, Aetius, supplanted his rivals and forced the Empress Placidia to invest him with supreme command of the armies of the West. He seems to have possessed all the qualities of a valiant fighter and capable statesman.1 If the Roman Empire could have been saved by arms or by diplomatic negotiations, Aetius would have saved it. He did at least hold off for a while the fall of that Empire by continually setting one barbarous nation against another.2 Two groups of barbarians were massed at the frontiers: the Franks, Saxons, and Alamani on the banks of the Rhine; the Goths, strictly so called, the Vandals, Gepidae, Heruli, and Burgundians along the Danube. Actius, knowing these tribes because he had been their hostage and had ties of friendship with several of their chiefs, overcame the Burgundians with the help of the Franks, attempted to establish the imperial authority in Spain with the aid of the Visigoths, and favored the formation of a Germanic kingdom on condition that it recognize the authority of the emperors.

<sup>1</sup> St. Gregory of Tours, Historia ecclesiastica Francorum, bk. 2, chap. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Moeller, Histoire du moyen âge, p. 65.

But the task he undertook was beyond human power. "The Empire dissolved under the action of that latent but irresistible force which poured all its vitality into the veins of the Church. Actius and Stilicho did as much harm by their ambition as they did good by their victories. When society had to be defended againt the invaders, the bishops and priests were the ones who assumed that mission." <sup>8</sup>

"It was upon the bishops that there had devolved the task of intervening, so far as it was possible to do so, with the barbarian chiefs or even of imploring the aid of the Roman commanders. Peril and common misery brought the clergy nearer to the faithful: the latter felt more than ever the necessity of having as bishops men of intellect and of sympathy. They asked for them in many cases from the monasteries which, since the time of St. Martin, were being established almost everywhere. At other times—as in the case of the celebrated St. Germain of Auxerre, of St. Paulinus of Nola, of Sidonius Apollinaris and many others—their choice fell upon former officials whose merit they had been able to appreciate during their secular administration." <sup>4</sup>

But interceding with a barbarian king or saving a city from pillage was not all. The peril of the invasions brought with it general uneasiness. Seeing the Empire endangered, pagans and Christians blamed each other for being the cause of its destruction. Said the pagans: "Rome is being punished for denying its ancient gods." "Rome is punished," replied the Christians, "because it is still too pagan." The mass of the population was greatly disturbed. Rome, which men were accustomed to consider eternal; Rome, where pagan worship was still associated with that of the old national divinities; Rome, which still remained, in the eyes of the most skeptical, a sort of divinity herself; Rome, which seemed to be the keystone of universal order, was now at the mercy of a sudden

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Kurth, Les Origines de la civilisation moderne (1886 ed.), I, 269 f.

<sup>4</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 403.

attack. Patriotism, love of tradition and order, the noblest sentiments of the human soul, were shaken.

## St. Augustine's City of God

The genius of Augustine, without waiting for the hour of supreme peril, considered the gravity of the problem. Ever since 412 he occupied the leisure moments of his busy ministry in the composition of a work that would require fourteen years of reflection and labor. He entitled it the City of God. It is the great Bishop's most important work. Along with the Confessions, the City of God holds a place by itself. The Confessions is the psychology of an individual soul; the City of God is the philosophy of the history of mankind. In face of the problem raised by the fall of the Roman Empire, Augustine broadens the scope of the problem and considers the destinies of mankind as a whole in relation to the Christian religion. Changing the meaning of the old word civitas (city), which fascinated the citizen of the Empire by its prestige, he gives the title "City of God" to the society of all the servants of God in all times and in all countries; the term "Earthly City," or city of the devil, he gives to the society of all the enemies of the true religion. The City of God includes all those who love God to the point of despising the world; the Earthly City is composed of those who cherish the world to the point of despising God. Augustine's erudition may now be somewhat antiquated, but his general views dominate even the history of events and peoples that he did not know.6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Hertling, Augustin, p. 100.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Heinrich Scholz' work on *The City of God*, published in Berlin in 1911, contains views that are open to question. But it emphasizes St. Augustine's absolute historical honesty and his great work's dominant idea, namely, to make "a vast picture of the conflicts between the faith and unbelief through the history of mankind." Cf. Scholz, Glaube und Unglaube in der Weltgeschichte, ein Kommentar zu Augustins De civitate Dei. Schilling, at about the same time, published a systematic collection of all the significant texts of St. Augustine on political and sociological questions.

#### Salvian and Orosius

Twelve years later a priest of Gallo-Roman race, Salvian by name, a disciple of St. Honoratus, in a less powerful work takes up the question of the future of the world and solves it clearly in favor of the barbarians.

"There are two kinds of barbarians in the world," he says, "that is, heretics and pagans. To all of these, as far as the divine law is concerned, I declare that we are incomparably superior; as far as our life and actions are concerned, I say with grief and lamentation, that we are worse. . . . The race of the Goths is treacherous but chaste, the Alans unchaste but not treacherous; the Franks are deceitful but hospitable; the Saxons savage in their cruelty but admirable for their chastity." <sup>7</sup>

In 417 Paulus Orosius, the disciple of St. Augustine, in his *Historia adversus paganos*, wrote these prophetic words: "You tell me the barbarians are the enemies of the State. I answer that the whole East thought the same thing about Alexander. The Romans seemed no better to the peoples whose peace and quiet they disturbed. The Germans are now upsetting the whole earth. But perhaps some day posterity will bestow the title of great kings upon those whom we cannot yet think of except as enemies." <sup>8</sup>

## The Bishop of Arles

The bishops and monks did more than defend the cities of the Roman world against pillage by the invaders. They organized the Churches already founded among the barbarians and founded additional ones. The establishment of the ecclesiastical primacy of Arles and the conquest of Ireland to Chris-

Cf. Schilling, *Die Staats und Soziallehre des hl. Augustinus.* See also Jules Martin's *Saint Augustin*, and Portalié in Vacant's *Dictionnaire de théologie*, I, 2290 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Salvianus, On the Government of God, IV, 13; VII, 15.

<sup>8</sup> Orosius, Adversus paganos historiarum libri VII, bk. 3. Cf. bk. 7.

tianity date from the time when St. Augustine, Orosius, and Salvian were writing the works we have just mentioned.

A decree of Emperor Honorius, dated May 23, 418, made Arles the meeting-place of the seven provinces of Gaul. In the confusion produced by the coming and going of the barbarians, Arles, located within reach of Spain and Italy, seemed to be the natural center, for the future, of Roman influence beyond the Alps. This eminent political position of the big Provençal city favored its religious supremacy. In 426 the election of Honoratus, the holy founder of Lerins, as bishop of Arles, increased its prestige still more. Honoratus was bishop only two years.

But he left behind him another self, the monk Hilary, likewise trained on the holy island. His repute for sanctity greatly impressed the clergy of Gaul. Hilary profited by this influence and strengthened ecclesiastical discipline around him. Not only did he give the clergy of his diocese lessons and models of the strictest virtues and most enlightened zeal, but at Riez, Orange, and Vaison (Vasio) he assembled provincial councils, at which the bishops of the Viennoise, the Second Narbonnaise, and the maritime Alps were present. In his desire to remove the election of bishops from human intrigue, he exerted his influence outside the limits of his canonical jurisdiction to make the episcopacy respect the rules of the Church.9 Probably this concerned provinces that were still in the power of the Romans; for the Visigoths were not yet beyond the Cevennes and the Corbieres, the Franks were not across the Somme, and the Burgundians were quartered in the mountains near Lake Geneva.<sup>10</sup> But, after the death of Aetius, when the barbarians passed these boundaries, it was a safeguard for the Christian Churches of Gaul, to have been strongly organized under the direction of the bishops of Arles.

<sup>9</sup> Duchesne, Fastes épiscopaux de l'ancienne Gaule, I, 110-113.

<sup>10</sup> Duchesne, loc. cit.

So intense was Christian life in the Churches of Gaul that it radiated into the Celtic countries. In 429 St. Lupus (or Loup) of Troyes and St. Germain of Auxerre went to Great Britain to pacify it, for it was disturbed by the heresy of Pelagius. About the same time, a Gallo-Roman, Patrick, who received religious training in the monasteries of Gaul, carried the Christian faith to Ireland.<sup>11</sup>

#### St. Patrick

Patrick's birthplace is a matter of dispute. But many authorities place it at or near Daventry, west of Northhampton, in central Britain. His father was a member of the town government. Patrick, when sixteen years old, was captured by Celtic pirates, then sold as a slave in Ireland. There for six years he experienced all the sufferings and horrors of slavery. But he escaped and went to Gaul. In his dreams he kept seeing the children of the Irish pagans extending their hands to him and asking him for baptism. He seemed to hear their plaintive voices saying: "Come to us; come and save us." <sup>12</sup>

After completing his ecclesiastical training <sup>13</sup> in the monasteries of Marmoutier and Lerins, he was ordained priest and bishop and, at his own repeated request, was sent as bishop to Ireland by Pope Celestine. His apostolate was long and painful. Generally it is said to have lasted thirty-three years. History and legend are so mingled in the accounts of his apostolate that it is hard to separate the two. What is beyond question is the marvelous success which finally crowned his mission. "In

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> St. Prosper, in his *Chronicon* (404), praises Pope Celestine because he had saved the Roman island (Great Britain) to the Catholic faith and made the barbarous island (Ireland) Christian. According to St. Prosper, this same pope consecrated the deacon Palladius and made him the first Irish bishop. But the history of Palladius is quite obscure.

<sup>12</sup> Acta sanctorum, March, II, 535.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Patrick was already a cleric when he was captured by the pirates.

the closing days of his life Patrick could rejoice himself with the sight of the Irish become a Christian people, whilst before him they knew no other gods but their idols." <sup>14</sup>

#### Faustus of Riez

The monasteries of Gaul did more than prepare reforming bishops like Honoratus and Hilary of Arles, missioners like Lupus of Troyes and Patrick. They became centers of learning, schools of theology. Of these the most celebrated was the school of Lerins. The years between the coming of Valentinian III and that of St. Leo the Great saw the publication of several works of Faustus of Riez, Hilary of Arles, and Salvian of Marseilles, all three of them trained in the school of Lerins.

Faustus, like Pelagius, was born in Britain. At an early age he came to southern Gaul. He became a monk in the Lerins monastery in 430. Three years later he was its abbot, and did not leave it until 452, when he was made bishop of the Church of Riez in Provence. Only at this latter date did he become conspicuous as the most zealous defender of semi-Pelagianism. His first works, written at Lerins, were confined to the refutation of Arianism and Macedonianism. In a style marked by force and life, but also not free from pomposity and obscurity, Faustus showed himself to be a man of ingenious and daring spirit, of the race of those who easily become masters. In a more modest book, the Life of St. Honoratus, published in 430, Hilary of Arles, another son of Lerins, appears rather as a doctor of the spiritual life. Independently of these works, many sermons, preached by the monks of Lerins and collected by the tachygraphers, were spread among the faithful and read with avidity.15

<sup>14</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 427.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The *Life of Saint Honoratus* was merely a sermon by St. Hilary, preached on the anniversary of St. Honoratus' death.

### St. Vincent of Lerins

But the success of all these works was surpassed by that which attended, in 434, a little book coming from the same monastery and entitled the Commonitorium. The author concealed his identity under the pseudonym of Peregrinus. Although in appearance it was merely an unpretentious memoryaid, intended to put within the reader's reach the teaching of the holy Fathers and the characteristic notes of true Catholic doctrine, it was in reality a scholastic manifesto in clear, measured terms. Its fundamental doctrine was expressed in two formulas that future ages would repeat and which the Vatican Council would insert, in part, in the first of its dogmatic Constitutions. 16 These were: I. Catholic doctrine consists in being attached especially to what has been believed everywhere and always by the Church; 17 2. this unchangeable deposit of faith is not an inert, motionless deposit; it is made "to grow and progress, in the intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom of each of the faithful and of the whole Church, while maintaining itself in the identity of one and same dogma, meaning, and thought." 18

This exposition of a doctrine, in itself irreproachable, one that the future would find fruitful, seemed to be directed against a particular theory of grace that was considered novel and dangerous. The author speaks of certain "heretics" daring to teach the existence "in their Church of a grace of God . . . such that, without any effort, without asking, seeking, or knocking, all their fellow-members were favored with it." <sup>19</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Denzinger, Enchiridion, no. 1800.

<sup>17 &</sup>quot;Magnopere curandum est ut id teneamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est. Hoc est enim vere proprieque catholicum." Chap. 2, alias 3.

<sup>18 &</sup>quot;Crescat igitur . . . et proficiat tam singulorum quam omnium . . . intelligentia, scientia, sapientia, sed in suo duntaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate eodem sensu, eademque sententia." Chap. 28.

<sup>19</sup> Chap. 26 (alias 38). Cf. St. Augustine, On the Gift of Perseverance, chap. 64 (alias 23); Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., V, 551.

The allusion to predisposing grace, taught by Augustine, was evident. It was regarded as an attack upon the illustrious African doctor.

The writing was the work of a priest named Vincent, whom the Church would later honor as St. Vincent of Lerins.<sup>20</sup> But, to understand the feeling he aroused, we must go back to the point where we left the history of the Pelagian controversy.

### Semi-Pelagianism

It is true that Augustine, in his polemics against Pelagius, Caelestius, and Julian of Eclanum, used expressions that were too absolute, that disturbed a large number of Catholics. Grace that produced the act and the volition seemed to destroy the freedom of the will. What added to this scandal was the fact that, besides these absolute expressions about the power of grace, Augustine advanced theories that appeared equally shocking about predestination and original sin. The Pelagians glorified man by making him the author of his own salvation. Augustine answered them by showing this salvation as the fruit of a divine predestination.<sup>21</sup> The Pelagians denied original sin. Augustine answered them by showing human nature as corrupted in its very source.<sup>22</sup>

Of course, these expressions of Augustine should not have been taken in their full rigor. This fact was amply proven by his practice, by the doctrine he elaborated in his sermons to the people, when he was not facing some opponent to be refuted.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> According to Poirel (*De utroque Common. lirin... dissertatio*), the work is that of Marius Mercator; but this identification seems not at all established, as the author himself declares in his preface.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Certum est numerum electorum, nec augendum, nec minuendum." On Rebuke and Grace, chap. 39 (alias 13). "Ipsum hominis meritum donum est gratuitum ex gratia." Sermon 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> He calls the race of Adam massa luti, massa tota vitiata. On this point, see Petau, Dogmata theologica, bk. 10, chap. 1, nos. 8, 9, Rottmanner, Der Augustinismus, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> Rottmanner, op. cit., p. 29.

Every time it was useful to do so, he himself repudiated a too strict interpretation of his words in the sense of a denial of free will. So, in 427, when the monks of a monastery at Hadrumetum were shocked by his letter to Sixtus, he wrote two treatises for them and several letters that quieted their apprehension.<sup>24</sup> But it was precisely in these two treatises that the monks of Lerins and the abbot of Saint-Victor at Marseilles, John Cassian, thought to discover even yet some exaggerated expressions. They protested. A certain layman, Prosper of Aquitaine, and a monk, Hilary, informed the Bishop of Hippo of these protests. Augustine, in 428, answered by the two books *De praedestinatione sanctorum* and *De dono perseverantiae*. The dispute went on until Augustine's death. And it even continued for a century longer.

### Death of St. Augustine

So many labors and struggles exhausted the health of the great bishop. On November 13, 428, he was seventy-four years old. Four months later, terrible news reached him at Hippo. An army of 80,000 Vandals, led by their King Genseric, had entered Africa and was advancing, methodically sacking the African provinces. Priests and bishops were seized as hostages, forced to follow the barbarian troops and to carry burdens like slaves. Boniface, the Count of Africa, in whom Augustine put his trust, instead of defending the province, went over to the barbarians. At a later date he did become reconciled with the Empire. But the situation grew worse and more critical. The encircling line of the besiegers was drawn closer. By the end of May, 430, Hippo was hemmed in on the Mediterranean side as well as on the land side.

The aged Bishop, in his sermons and conferences with his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> On Grace and Free Will, On Rebuke and Grace, and various letters to Valentinus.

faithful, stimulated their courage. In the third month of the siege, weighed down by fatigue, he was confined to bed. "Until this last illness," writes his disciple Possidius, "he had continually preached to the people. Ten days before his bodily deliverance, he asked all of us present that no one should enter his room except at the time of the physicians' visit or when food was brought to him. His request was obeyed, and he employed all his time in prayer. Up to the very end he enjoyed the use of all his senses. It was in our presence, before our very eyes, while our prayers mingled with his own, that he fell asleep with his fathers." <sup>25</sup>

Augustine left this world on August 28, 430, at the age of seventy-six. But today, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, there is not perhaps in the Catholic Church a thought more living than his. In all religious families that claim dependence on his inspiration, in all the theological and philosophical doctrines that are connected with him, in all the intellectual horizons that his genius opened, in all the honors bestowed on him by this Catholic Church that he loved so much, in all the souls that are indebted to him for their return to God or the strengthening of their faith, in all those who are moved to tears by the touching pages of his *Confessions*, the great soul of Augustine still lives.

# The Christological Problem

The barbarian invasions in the West often disturbed the theological disputes; the comparative tranquillity which the East enjoyed under Theodosius II gave them a chance to develop more freely. The spirited character of those controversies did not always bring joy to the Church. But at least, to pass judgment on them and to throw upon them the light

<sup>25</sup> Possidius, Life of Augustine, 31.

of her dogmatic definitions, she was able to assemble a general council of about two hundred bishops.

While the Latins were disputing about the relations of the human and the divine in man, the Greeks were arguing about the relations of the human and the divine in Christ. Neither of these questions could be called idle. The whole program which St. Augustine's genius undertook might be summed up in these words: "To know God and to know oneself, *Noverim Te, noverim me.*"

In its first two general councils the Church anathematized the two extreme opinions regarding the Savior, which had manifested themselves from the beginning of Christianity. At Nicaea against the Arians, who denied or beclouded His absolute divinity, she proclaimed Him consubstantial with the Father, absolutely God. At Constantinople against the Apollinarians, who mutilated the idea of His humanity, she declared Him to be perfectly man. Henceforth no one could call himself Catholic without acknowledging and adoring in Christ a Man-God, with all the consequences which that ineffable title implies. But another problem remained to be solved. Its apparent subtlety hid a deep meaning. The question was where to place the unity of the God-Man. Was Christ a man who by His merits had been elevated to divinity? Was He a God, who abased Himself even to being man? Two great Schools contended over this in the East.

The School of Alexandria, ever faithful to its Platonic beginnings, was inclined, in its conceptions, to start out from the idea of God, The School of Antioch, more dependent upon the Aristotelian method, inclined rather to consider everything from the point of view of man. Both gave holy doctors to the Church. Athanasius had been the glory of Alexandria; and Chrysostom, that of Antioch. Unfortunately the diversity of the tendencies, while explicable and legitimate and capable of being fruitful, was complicated in the latter times by a violent

antipathy between the two cities. Alexandria was aggrieved by the decree of 381, which dispossessed the see of Athanasius from its primacy and transferred that honor to Constantinople. And this latter city bitterly remembered the treatment accorded to Chrysostom by Theophilus, the bishop of Alexandria. These circumstances contributed to embitter every dicussion that brought the two rival Schools face to face.

### St. Cyril of Alexandria

The most conspicuous representative of the School of Alexandria at the begining of the fifth century was a nephew of the too celebrated Theophilus. His name was Cyril. We are without historic data regarding his youth. It has been surmised that he received his training in asceticism in the monasteries of the Thebaid.<sup>26</sup>

He was a native of Alexandria. The schools of that city probably furnished him with the elements of his vast theological knowledge. In the eyes of all, "Cyril was a man of great ecclesiastical learning and spotless life." <sup>27</sup> But, being too much involved in his uncle's life and activities, he could not help sharing some of the latter's prejudices and imitating some of the methods of his government. In 403, with Theophilus he took part in the Synod of the Oak, which deposed Chrysostom. Nine years later, when called to succeed Theophilus as head of the Church of Alexandria, he manifested toward the Novatians and the Jews a rigor that perhaps was not free from passion. But when Socrates pictures him as harsh and brutal in his conflict with Orestes the prefect and even insinuates that he inspired the murder of the learned Hypatia, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 360.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> St. Cyril, Letter 33; P. G., LXXVII, 159.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> St. Isidore of Pelusium, Letters (P. G., LXXVIII, 361, 369, 392).

prefect's friend, this evidently biased testimony cannot be accepted by history. That such is the fact is acknowledged even by writers who are the least favorable toward Cyril.<sup>30</sup> What is better attested is the loyalty with which, after recognizing the mistake of his first judgment regarding Chrysostom, he resumed friendly relations with him. We are told that he even consented to place the name of the Patriarch of Constantinople in the diptych of the Church of Alexandria.<sup>31</sup>

Following Origen's example, like all the Alexandrians Cyril honored the Virgin Mary with the title of Mother of God (theotokos). In accord with his master Athanasius, he held that Christ "is not a man in whom the Word descended, but is the Word Himself born in a flesh that is His own"; <sup>32</sup> and also that Christ's humanity, howsoever complete, does not exist separately, does not belong to itself, but belongs to the Word who made it His; <sup>33</sup> and that from complete God and complete man there results a single Being—Cyril uses indifferently the expressions "single person," "single hypostasis," "single nature" <sup>34</sup>—which is the very being of God.

From a wholly different point of view, the doctors of Antioch considered in Christ first His humanity, and then rose to His divinity. Among them should be noted the names of Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorius. Diodorus had the glory of restoring, at the end of the fourth century, the School founded by St. Lucian. Jealous to maintain, againt the Apollinarians, the integrity of the two natures in Christ, he vigorously distinguished in the Savior the Son of God from the Son of David, and even said that the Word

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> "The accounts given by Socrates represent the reports credited at Constantinople and so admit a certain measure of exaggeration." Duchesne, *op. cit.*, III, 210 note. On the murder of Hypatia, see Schäfer, in the *Catholic University Bulletin*, VIII (1902), 441 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Nicephorus Callistus, *Ecclesiastica Historia*, XIV, 28; P. G., CXLVI, 1152.

<sup>32</sup> St. Cyril, Letter 4.

<sup>38</sup> This is the ἰδιοποίησις of St. Athanasius.

<sup>84</sup> Φύσις, ὑπόστασις, πρόσωπον. Cf. Tixeront, History of Dogmas, III, 58 ff.

is not the son of Mary.<sup>35</sup> St. Cyril, then, made no mistake in attacking this precursor of Nestorius. Although Diodorus never was anthematized, we find in the extant fragments of his writings certain expressions that were later condemned in the patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>36</sup>

Theodore of Mopsuestia was the theorist of the School. He seems to have been aware of the import of his doctrine much more than was his pupil Nestorius. He sustained the Pelagians, preceiving in them certain tendencies that harmonized with his own. Like Diodorus, the Bishop of Mopsuestia had in mind particularly the refutation of Apollinarianism. But he was more concerned than Diodorus was with preserving the traditional formulas in his language, although in reality he pushed the logical consequences of his principles further.

Theodore neglected no opportunity to declare that the two natures of Christ, the human and the divine, constituted one single person; <sup>37</sup> that consequently in Jesus there is only one Son, one Lord. Yet, "for the purpose of safeguarding the integrity and inconfusion of the two natures in their union, the Bishop of Mopsuestia speaks of these natures as two persons complete in themselves." <sup>38</sup>

He holds that it is Jesus who strove against temptation and, aided by the divinity, advanced toward perfection.

"It is the man only that is the historical Jesus. Theodore says that the union implies unity of will and action between the two natures. The unity referred to by Theodore is merely a moral harmony; the human will conformed to that of the Word, and subordinated its action to His." <sup>39</sup>

The practical consequence of this system was to condemn, as Apollinarian errors, all the expressions that attribute to

<sup>35</sup> Photius, Bibliotheca, 248; P. G., CIII, 1560.

<sup>36</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., III, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia, De Incarnatione, 8; P. G., LXVI, 969 f., 983 f.

<sup>38</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., III, 18.

<sup>89</sup> Ihid.

the concrete man, in Jesus Christ, the qualities and acts of divinity. "It is foolish," he said, "to claim that God was born of a virgin." <sup>40</sup> Theodore seems not to have perceived another more serious consequence, for it destroyed the whole economy of the Redemption, and the leading reason which St. Athanasius placed at the basis of his argumentation against Arianism: namely, if the historical Jesus was not the very Person of the Word of God, how are we to explain the infinite value of the sacrifice of the cross and the deification of man by the immolation and resurrection of a God?

Nestorius made no addition to this system. "Theodore of Mopsuestia was a Nestorius before Nestorius." <sup>41</sup> But he was not attacked during his life. No one appears to have perceived the profound evils of his teaching. One of his pupils, by proclaiming it with brilliancy, drew to it the attention of the friends of Catholic tradition, particularly of Cyril of Alexandria.

### Nestorius

The very year of Theodore's death (April 4, 428), after Sisinnius the patriarch of Constantinople also had died, when tumultuous rivalries threatened to occur over the choice of his successor, imperial influence set to work to bring about the election of a candidate from outside the capital city.<sup>42</sup> The person chosen was Nestorius,<sup>43</sup> the abbot of a monastery at Antioch. He was reputed to be an austere priest and an eloquent preacher. By the tendency of his mind he was not a metaphysician, but rather a trained exegete.<sup>44</sup> He was accustomed

<sup>40</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia, Contra Apollinarium.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Bardenhewer, op. cit., p. 321. "Theodore of Mopsuestia is generally regarded as the true Nestorius, i. e., the theoretical exponent of the heresy to which the Patriarch of Constantinople gave his name." Tixeront, op. cit., III, 13.

<sup>42</sup> Socrates, H. E., VII, 20.

<sup>43</sup> Nau, Nestorius d'après les sources orientales.

<sup>44</sup> This fact seems to be made clear in the work of Junglas, Die Irrlehre des Nestorius.

to the literal interpretation of Scripture as then practiced in Antioch. Consequently he was chiefly concerned with Christ's human deeds and inclined to regard the divinity in Christ only as the moral acquisition consummated by His death. "He was a trained theologian, well versed in the method of literal exegesis and accustomed to weigh the meaning of Biblical texts, as was usual at Antioch." <sup>45</sup>

The new patriarch of Constantinople set himself up as a grim defender of orthodoxy against all heresies or dubious doctrines. Five days after his consecration, he had the police close a chapel which the Arians had kept in an old quarter of the city. Shortly afterwards, some Macedonian and Quarto-deciman communities were dissolved. The Novatians escaped his rigor only through the powerful backing they had at court. Thereafter Nestorius turned his efforts against the heresy which his teacher Theodore had taught him to detest: the heresy of Apollinarianism.

The strife was begun, about the close of 428, not by the Patriarch himself, but by an Antioch priest, named Anastasius, whom he had brought with him and who, like himself, had been taught by the Bishop of Mopsuestia. In his sermons to the people, Anastasius attacked the title theotokos (Mother of God), given to the Virgin Mary, as implying an absurdity. This title was in current use. Protests were made. Nestorius took Anastasius' part in a series of sermons in which, by the theological theory of his teacher Theodore, he endeavored to justify the sermon of his priest Anastasius. In these first declarations Nestorius appears less radical than Theodore, more concerned with preserving the traditional expressions about the oneness of person in Christ. From this point of view "he is not as much of a Nestorian as Theodore." 46 And he maintained this concern to the end; but, on the other hand,

<sup>45</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., III, 21.

<sup>46</sup> Ibidem, III, 33.

he always maintained his ideas with unbending obstinacy.47

The demonstration in connection with the word *theotokos* divided the population of Constantinople. People of the world and of the court took the Patriarch's side. But the masses, the monks, and part of the secular clergy declared themselves against him. Clamorous disputes followed.

### St. Cyril Denounces Nestorianism

The Patriarch of Alexandria was notified of the danger by monks, who told him that Nestorius' ideas had reached even their places of solitude. Cyril merely wrote them a long letter, putting them on their guard against the new doctrines. "Should Mary be called *theotokos?*" he said. "Yes, indeed, since she brought forth the God Word made man. The term is traditional. All the orthodox Fathers, both Eastern and Western, have accepted it." "I Thereafter we meet the word *theotokos* in all St. Cyril's writings. For him it is the criterion of true Christological belief, as the word *homoousios* had been for Athanasius the test of the true Trinitarian belief.

In spite of the fact that he is not mentioned by name, Nestorius was vexed by this letter. Cyril wrote him directly in peaceful, friendly terms. "The faithful," says Cyril, "even Celestine the bishop of Rome, are greatly scandalized. . . . I beg you to grant Mary the title of *theotokos*. It is not a new appellation." <sup>50</sup> Nestorius answered with a contemptuous letter, and continued his sermons and propaganda. But he did more than this. He hired disreputable people to spread all kinds of lies about the Patriarch of Alexandria. Cyril complains of this in a second letter which is a full and exact doctrinal ex-

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, III, 21-42.

<sup>48</sup> Ad monachos Aegypti, P. G., LXVII, 9-40.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., P. G., LXXVII, 16.

<sup>50</sup> P. G., LXXVII, 41.

position of the question. "Therein he explains the meaning of the words: 'The Word was made Flesh'; how the eternal Word was born in time; how it is true to say that God was born, died, rose from the dead, and that Mary is the Mother of God." <sup>51</sup> Nestorius replied in a sharp tone, and discussed the arguments advanced against him.

The Patriarch of Constantinople did not confine himself to these epistolary polemics. "There were at Constantinople some Alexandrian clergy who had been deprived by Cyril for certain misdoings; they made strong complaints against him alike to the bishop and to the magistrates." <sup>52</sup> Nestorius made a show of being interested in them. What move was he planning? Would he, by virtue of the supremacy of Constantinople, claim a right to summon the Patriarch of Alexandria before his tribunal? Anything might be expected from the audacity of such a man. But Cyril wrote: "Let him not imagine that I will allow myself to be judged by him. I will refuse to recognize his jurisdiction. And the roles will be reversed. I can force him to be on the defensive." <sup>53</sup>

Only one authority was competent to judge the case of Nestorius: that was the bishop of Rome, the head of the universal Church. Cyril was mindful of this. He wrote to Pope Celestine, reminding him of the tradition according to which grave questions should always be submitted to the Roman Pontiff.<sup>54</sup> Celestine's reply, discussed in a Roman Council (August 430), was such as might have been foreseen. Nestorius' doctrine was declared unacceptable, and the Patriarch of Constantinople was called upon, under pain of excommunication, to retract within ten days after receipt of the decision.<sup>55</sup>

To put an end to the activities of Nestorius and his follow-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Mahé, art. "Cyrille d'Alexandrie," in the Dictionnaire de théologie, III, 2479.

<sup>52</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 233.

<sup>53</sup> St. Cyril, Letter 10.

<sup>54</sup> Idem, Letter 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Celestine, Letter 11 (to Cyril); P. L., L., 463.

ers, Cyril at the same time addressed Emperor Theodosius II,<sup>56</sup> Empresses Pulcheria and Eudoxia, and the two princesses Arcadia and Marcina.<sup>57</sup> This second move, however, was not equally successful. Nestorius, at the very outset of the controversy, had been careful to make sure of the support of the court. Emperor Theodosius answered Cyril in a threatening letter, accusing him of disturbing the peace of the Empire.<sup>58</sup>

## The Anathematisms of St. Cyril

Up to this point, in the minds of people of sound faith, Cyril's cause possessed the marks of truth and moderation; that of Nestorius had all the signs of error and revolt. In a conflict with the Emperor, Cyril had the whole Church behind him. An unfortunate imprudence on his part—but one hard to avoid—suddenly changed the situation and at once turned a number of bishops and laymen against him. We refer to the publication of the famous document known in history as the *Anathematisms of St. Cyril.*"

Pope Celestine, when condemning Nestorius, confided the execution of the decision to Cyril. The latter, after convening a council at Alexandria, published a lengthy synodal letter, which was a masterly exposition of Catholic doctrine on the mystery of the Incarnation, followed by twelve anathema formulas, or anathematisms, to which Nestorius must agree to escape the penalty of excommunication.<sup>59</sup>

"These formulas show great theological acumen, and were framed in such a way as to make evasion on the part of Nestorius impossible. But they are open to two objections: they contain numerous details and precisions which the Pope had not required; and—what

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> P. G., LXXVI, 1133-1200.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., cols. 1201-1420.

<sup>58</sup> Mansi, IV, 1100 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Mansi, III, 2509-2511. Hefele (III, 31-34) gives the Greek text and translation of these anathematisms; Tixeront (III, 39 f.) gives a short summary of them.

is more important—they present the dogma of Christ's personality in distinctly Cyrillian concepts and terms, which, as we shall see later, were not free from imperfection and which Nestorius in particular could not accept. Thus, for instance, the second anathematism affirms that the union between the divinity and the humanity in Christ was καο' ὑπόστασιν.60 Now, as has already been remarked, the word ὑπόστασιs had not vet acquired a settled and definite meaning in the language of Christology. Nestorius understood it to mean a concrete substance, whilst Cyril used it sometimes for πρόσωπον, sometimes for φύσις. But it was the expression ενωσις φυσική in the third anathematism, that was to be the most regretted. I have translated this expression by 'physical union'—in opposition to moral union. This is the meaning St. Cyril attached to it, as he himself explained; but it was inevitable that prejudiced opponents should explain it in the sense that the divinity and the humanity formed but one nature in Jesus Christ. This, of course, was Apollinarianism, i. e., the very same error which Nestorius and his followers had fought with all their might, and the fear of which had carried them to the other extreme. 61

"Naturally, they were unwilling to subscribe to it. Nestorius issued twelve counter-anathematisms, in which he upheld his own teaching and condemned that of his opponent as Apollinarian. John of Antioch, and even those Antiochians who had first advised Nestorius to submit, changed their attitude. Andrew of Samosata, in the name of the bishops of the East, 62 and Theodoret, in his own name attacked Cyril's anathematisms, especially the third, which

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> The meaning of the word "hypostasis" became established in the Arian controversy regarding the doctrine of the Trinity. In their Christological doctrine, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius identified the word "hypostasis" (person) and the word "physis" (nature). For them each of these words signified the concrete being, the "usia." See the *Livre d'Héraclide*, pp. 42 f., 136 f., 145, 148.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> On St. Cyril's anathematisms, see the article of Joseph Mahé, "Les Anathematismes de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie et les évêques orientaux du patriarchat d'Antioche," in the Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, VII (1906), 505 ff.

<sup>62 &</sup>quot;We may recall that, in the fifth century, the word East designated especially the diocese of the East, viz., that country which corresponded generally to the patriarchate of Antioch." Tixeront, History of Dogmas, III, 41 note. This patriarchate had a vast extent, embracing, besides Syria, other territories, such as Arabia and Persia. Cf. Hefele-Leclercq, Histoire des conciles, II, 293.

seemed to teach only one nature in Jesus Christ. Cyril answered their criticisms and explained that in the expression  $e_{\nu\omega\sigma\iota\kappa}$  the word  $e_{\nu\omega\iota\kappa}$  meant simply true and real. However he felt that he ought to justify himself still more completely and later on published a third Explicatio duodecim Capitum  $e_{\tau}$  with the avowed purpose of warding off the charge of Apollinarianism brought against him.  $e_{\tau}$ 

"At the beginning of the year 431, after all these proceedings, the condition of things was just as unsettled as before. Nestorius had not submitted; the Oriental bishops, if they did not approve his doctrinal excesses, upheld his person; so also did the Emperor. There was but one resource left: to hold a general council; and this is precisely what Nestorius had asked the Pope, and the monks of Constantinople had begged the Emperor to do.<sup>66</sup> Cyril himself had asked for it.<sup>67</sup> Theodosius II and his colleague Valentinian III convoked a general council to be held at Ephesus on Pentecost Day, June 7, 431.<sup>68</sup> The Pope sent two bishops, Arcadius and Projectus, to represent the Roman Council, and a priest named Philip to represent himself personally; and demanded that Nestorius, though already condemned, be present at the Council." <sup>69</sup>

Said the Pope in his letter: "God wishes not the death of a sinner, but that he be converted." And he urged Cyril to make every effort to reëstablish peace in the Church and to win Nestorius to the truth.<sup>70</sup>

## Council of Ephesus (431)

The day appointed for the opening of the Council was June 7, 431. Among the earliest arrivals was Nestorius, proud and

<sup>63</sup> P. G., LXXVI, 332, 405.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., cols. 293-312.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Jugie, "La Terminologie christologique de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie" in the Échos d'Orient, XV (1912), 12-27.

<sup>66</sup> Mansi, IV, 1101 ff., especially 1108.

<sup>67</sup> Evagrius, H. E., I, 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Mansi, IV, 1292. The Emperor sent a special invitation to St. Augustine (Mansi, IV, 1208); but the latter was dead when the imperial messenger arrived.

<sup>69</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., pp. 40-42.

<sup>70</sup> Mansi, IV, 1292.

threatening, like a general arriving on the battle-field. He was accompanied by sixteen bishops and, says Socrates, "followed by a multitude of laymen of all classes, who formed his escort." The Shortly afterwards, Cyril arrived with fifty bishops. While waiting for the latecomers, the Patriarch of Alexandria in conformity with the Pope's advice tried, through Theodotus of Ancyra and Acacius of Mitylene, who were bound in friendship to Nestorius, to win him gently to the truth.

These efforts encountered the obstinacy of the heresiarch. It is surprising to see what contradictory statements historians place on the lips of Nestorius. The most acceptable explanation is that of a learned historian who speaks of Nestorius as "a sort of braggart, shifting from one extreme to the other, from orthodoxy to heresy, almost without being aware of so doing." 72 We are told by contemporaries that Nestorius was "a handsome man, of ruddy complexion, with large eyes and a strong, sonorous voice." 78 He was conceited and thought himself irresistible. He said: "Cyril runs away from me because he is afraid I will convert him." Acacius and Theodotus were hopeful of winning him over when they heard him say: "After all, I am quite willing to say that Mary is the Mother of God, if they agree not to interpret these words in an Apollinarian sense." But, when persuaded to assert himself upon the essential point of the question, he declared to Theodotus: "Never will I acknowledge as God a babe who is two months old." In speaking to Acacius, he was not less brutally sarcastic. He said: "If you insist on saying that the Word of God is the same Person as Christ, you must confess, since the Trinity is indivisible, that the Father and the Holy Ghost became incarnate." One of his followers, echoing his words and elaborat-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Socrates, H. E., VII, 34.

<sup>72</sup> Hefele-Leclercy, Histoire des conciles, II, 204.

<sup>78</sup> Nau, Nestorius d'après les sources orientales, p. 12.

ing them, added: "It is wrong to regard the Jews as deicides. It was not a God they put to death, but a man." 74

Yet John of Antioch and his suffragans had not arrived, alleging one reason after another which seemed mere pretexts. Finally two envoys from the Patriarch of Syria declared on his behalf that the opening of the Council should not be postponed on his account. From this it was inferred that John wanted to avoid being present at the condemnation of his friend Nestorius. Then Cyril, urged by his friends and exhibiting to the Council about to convene his delegation from the Pope for the execution of the sentence pronounced against Nestorius, declared (June 22) the Council opened and took its presidency.

Nestorius was invited to take part in the deliberations. First he replied "that he would think the matter over." Again he replied "that he would appear when all the bishops were assembled." When a third invitation was sent to him, the armed men guarding his house maltreated the Council's messengers. The Patriarch felt himself sustained by the Emperor and probably counted on some interference by the imperial authority to prevent the holding of the Council. In fact, just as the prothonotary was proclaiming the purpose of the assembly, Count Candidian, captain of the Emperor's bodyguard, delegated as his representative at Ephesus, entered the Church of St. Mary, \*\*\* where the meeting was being held, followed by

<sup>74</sup> Socrates, H. E., VII, 34; Hefele-Leclercq, loc. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> We consider with Tixeront (op. cit., III, 43 note) that this is the natural explanation of Cyril's action. Pope Celestine commissioned Cyril to execute the Roman sentence and advised him how he should act with Nestorius. The Acts of the Council speak of Cyril as "holding the place of the Bishop of Rome." (Mansi, IV, 1124.) Moreover, since the patriarch of Constantinople was the accused and since the patriarch of Antioch excused himself, the patriarch of Alexandria was given the presidency of the Council. The vague charges that had been made against him, outside of ecclesiastical regulations, could not furnish a reason for him to refuse to preside.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Mansi, IV, 1131 ff.

<sup>77</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>78</sup> Instead of "St. Mary's Church," recent historians read "Mary's Church."

a band of soldiers, and announced to the bishops the command to disperse. There followed a tumultuous scene, which ended when the imperial legate withdrew. A number of bishops, on the side of Nestorius, then left. Cyril, disregarding this remarkable injunction, ordered the reading of the imperial letter of convocation, took official cognizance of Nestorius' refusal to attend, and at once declared that the business before the Council was the consideration of the doctrinal question raised by the Patriarch of Consantinople.

One hundred fifty-nine bishops and one deacon (representing the Bishop of Carthage) were present at this first session. The papal legates had not yet arrived. The inquiry was conducted with method and precision.

### Condemnation of Nestorius

First the Nicene Creed was read.<sup>80</sup> Then was read Cyril's second letter to Nestorius. All the Fathers declared that it was in agreement with the Creed. Nestorius' reply to Cyril was read; and all declared that it was opposed to the Nicene faith.<sup>81</sup> The consequence of these unanimous votes was the following decree, also approved by the unanimous vote of the Fathers: "That all who do not anathematize Nestorius be anathema, for he is anathematized by the true faith and by the holy council." See We should note that at this first session several other documents were read, notably Cyril's letter that ended with the famous anathematisms. But nowhere do the Acts of the Council say that these anathematisms received a special ap-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> The gathering was almost exclusively Eastern. There was a general abstention on the part of the West, which was ravaged by invasions and which was not greatly disturbed by the questions that would be discussed at the Council.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> That is, the Nicene Creed strictly so called, not the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople. Cf. The *Livre d'Héraclide*, pp. 125–163.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Most of the bishops expressed their reasons for voting as they did. See Mansi, IV, 1139–1170.

<sup>82</sup> Mansi, IV, 1170 ff.

proval by the Council, as is the case with Cyril's second letter to Nestorius.<sup>83</sup>

To show how resolved they were to remain faithful to the tradition of the Fathers, upon Flavian's motion a series of Patristic passages was read touching upon the two natures in Christ. Peter of Alexandria, Athanasius, Popes Julius I and Felix I, Theophilus of Alexandria, Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil, and others were brought forward in evidence against the heresy of Nestorius.<sup>84</sup> In opposition to these testimonies twenty passages of Nestorius were read. In these were found expressed the errors with which he was charged.

The only thing remaining to be done was the declaration of the sentence of deposition. The Fathers drew it up in the following terms: "Obliged by the canons and by the letters of our most holy Father and fellow-bishop, Celestine, bishop of Rome, we have had to come to this sad sentence: The Lord Jesus Christ, whom the impious Nestorius has blasphemed, decides, by this holy Council, that Nestorius is deprived of the episcopal dignity and the priestly communion." <sup>85</sup> This decree was signed by 198 bishops present. Others added their names afterwards.

"The session had lasted from early in the morning into the night, and the assembled population of Ephesus waited the whole day to hear the decision. When this was at last known, there arose an universal rejoicing; they commended the Synod, and solemnly accompanied the members, particularly Cyril, with torches and censers to their houses. The city was also illuminated in many places. This

<sup>83</sup> Denzinger's Enchiridion gives St. Cyril's twelve anathematisms in connection with the Council of Ephesus; and the fifth ecumenical Council, in its sixth session (Mansi, IX, 327–329), introduces them as belonging to the Acts of Ephesus, "pars corum quae Ephesi gesta sunt." This means simply that they were read as documents to which no objection was made; it does not mean that they received special approval.

<sup>84</sup> These texts may be seen in Mansi, IV, 1183-1195. The most important of them will be found in Hefele, III, 49 ff.

<sup>85</sup> Mansi, IV, 1211; Livre d'Héraclide, pp. 235 f.

is joyfully related by Cyril in one of the three letters which he despatched at that time to the members of his Church of Alexandria, and to the monks of Egypt." 86

The next day, upon receiving notification of the decree which condemned him, Nestorius gave way to an outburst of anger. He wrote to the Emperors in complaint. Count Candidian, equally wrathful, did the same, protesting against the decisions of a council which had met in spite of his explicit prohibition. Both of them were especially displeased since they were helpless in the presence of the whole population flocking to the churches to hear Cyril and his friends explain the decisions of the Council. Nestorius felt hurt by the terms employed in his regard: the Council had called him impious; and Cyril, in communicating to him the decree of deposition, called him Judas. He forgot the long consideration shown him and his own ceaseless provocations.

# John of Antioch

At this juncture the arrival of John of Antioch and his suffragans revived Nestorius' hopes. Count Candidian told them, in his own way, about the holding of the Council despite the Emperor's orders. A few bishops devoted to Nestorius had declined to attend the session on the 22d. They joined the newly arrived bishops. Thus they formed a group of forty-three prelates. Immediately John of Antioch, with the dust of his journey still on him, assembled them in his house.<sup>87</sup> Delegates from the Council, sent to notify them of its decisions, were roughly driven back by the soldiers acting as an escort for John of Antioch and his group.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Hefele, III, 51; Mansi, IV, 1242 f.

<sup>87</sup> Mansi, IV, 1334.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> John of Antioch, in his account later on, says, on the contrary, that the delegation rushed upon him tumultuously. (Hefele, III, 56.)

"Then without waiting any longer, without citation, without discussion, they pronounced the deposition of the Patriarch of Alexandria and of the Bishop of Ephesus, as well as the excommunication of all their adherents." 89

Cyril and Memnon (the Bishop of Ephesus) paid no attention to these illegal decrees. Memnon even closed his churches to the dissenting bishops. The Emperor, urged thereto by Candidian's reports, issued an imperial rescript (June 29) declaring his rejection of everything that had been done by the council over which Cyril presided. But in the beginning of July the legates of the Pope arrived and, when informed of the whole affair, subscribed, in the name of the Supreme Pontiff, to what had been decreed against Nestorius and his heresy. Strengthened by this approval, the Council which, since July 10, had been meeting in Memnon's episcopal residence or in St. Mary's Church, summoned John of Antioch and his followers, the "Easterners," as they were called. Upon their refusal to appear before the Council, it declared them excommunicated and deprived of any jurisdiction. A written report of this decision was sent to the Pope and to the Emperor.90

#### The Nicene Creed

The Council held two more sessions, the sixth and seventh. Considering the Nestorian question settled, it turned its attention to the regulation of certain special matters.

A decision of the sixth session deserves our attention, on account of the disputes it would later occasion. A Philadelphia priest, Charisius by name, related that Nestorians, taking advantage of the ignorance of certain converts, had them sign, instead of the pure Nicene Creed, a symbol containing the

<sup>89</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 247.

<sup>90</sup> Mansi, IV, 1361, 1364.

Nestorian errors. Following this report, the Council decreed, under threat of excommunication and deposition, the rejection of any symbol differing from that of Nicaea, in particular the one presented by Charisius.

It appears evident, when we read this decision in its context, that the Fathers of Ephesus had no thought of forbidding their successors to issue new definitions in opposition to new errors or to accept professions of faith more developed than that of Nicaea. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 did not hesitate to put the symbol of Constantinople in circulation, and later on the Church had no reluctance about inserting the word "Filioque" in the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople. But at different periods heretics or schismatics—the Monophysites and later the schismatic Greeks—have appealed to the Ephesus decree for the rejection of new decisions of the Church. 91

When the Council of Ephesus was meeting, Pelagianism was at its end. Pope Zosimus had given it a final blow by his celebrated *Tractoria*. However, several bishops involved in the Pelagian heresy (e. g., Julian, Florus, and Orontius) had appeared in Constantinople after the coming of Nestorius, and the Patriarch, contrary to his usual practice toward heretics, had given them a friendly welcome. The Fathers of Ephesus, therefore, deemed it well to condemn positively the heresy of Pelagius and Caelestius in two of their canons, the first and fourth.

# Supremacy of the Holy See

It is noteworthy how energetically the Fathers of the Council professed their respect and obedience toward the Roman Pontiff. When approving the condemnation of Nestorius, the legate of the Holy See (the priest Philip) proclaimed, "as a

<sup>91</sup> It is to be noted that the Council of Ephesus forbade ἐτέραν πίστιν (a profession of faith different, unlike, contrary), not ἄλλαν πίστιν (another profession of faith). Furthermore the decree is disciplinary, not strictly dogmatic.

thing that was not questioned by anyone, as a fact recognized in all ages," the primacy of the Apostle Peter and his successors over the universal Church. He declared that the bishop of Rome was the prince, the chief, the head of all the Churches, that Peter lived in him and communicated his powers to him. In the circumstances of their declaration, these words did not of course have the value of a dogmatic definition, but in them we find the substance of the solemn definitions which were pronounced fourteen centuries later by the Vatican Council, which adopted as its own and inserted the very words of the priest Philip at the Council of Ephesus.<sup>92</sup>

#### Execution of the Decrees

The doctrinal work of the Council was finished. But peace would not be restored so long as the Emperor sustained the dissenters, so long as Nestorius' deposition was not actually carried out, so long as the Patriarch of Antioch refused reconciliation with the Patriarch of Alexandria, so long as, behind these two prelates, misunderstandings and passions continued to stir the masses. It was no easy matter to overcome these four obstacles.

For the welfare of the Empire, the reëstablishment of peace was a matter of great concern to Emperor Theodosius. He thought he could get it by force. For this purpose he sent to Ephesus a new representative, Count John, a stern man. As Count John himself tells us, his arrival filled the city with fear. He considered that he would get the upper hand of all by treating the leaders with severity. He therefore imprisoned Cyril, Memnon, and Nestorius. But the orthodox were not

<sup>92</sup> Denzinger, nos. 1823, 1824, 1825. On the Council of Ephesus, see Jugie, art. "Ephèse (Concile d'), in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, VI, 137-163. On the proofs of the ecumenicity of this Council, see ibid., cols. 158-161. Cf. Jugie, "La Primauté romaine au concile d'Ephèse," in the Échos d'Orient, XIV (1911), 136-146.

discouraged by the severity used toward their patriarch. Says Tillemont: "Even those who had never seen St. Cyril until this Council were ready to go into banishment with him if he should be exiled, and were willing to expose their lives for his life." 98

The Emperor then tried to bring about an agreement or understanding by summoning to him a deputation of the two parties. It is altogether likely that, following the Eastern custom, 94 Cyril in the present case directed his deputation to bring presents to the court in his name. But it appears to be a pure calumny to say, on the testimony of Theodoret—whose partiality is well known 95—that "Cyril scattered gold with an open hand along all the paths of the palace," 96 and to attribute to these bounties Theodosius' change of attitude in his relations with Nestorius. The scholarly Tillemont and the eminent historian of the councils, Hefele, adopt an explanation more in accord with the character of the Patriarch of Alexandria and that of the Emperor, namely, that the orthodox succeeded in making Theodosius see that right was on their side.97 Nestorius' deposition was confirmed by the imperial authority. his succession in the see of Constantinople was given to a

<sup>93</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, XIV, 463.

<sup>94</sup> Rampolla, in his Life of St. Melania the Younger, notes that the Saint, when admitted to audience with Honorius, "agreeable to custom, and not wishing to present herself empty-handed, brought valuable gifts of goldsmith's work and of elegant cloths worthy of a queen, as also garments of cloth of gold and of silk to be given to the courtiers." Rampolla, Santa Melania Giuniore senatrice romana, p. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Theodoret's violent pamphlet against St. Cyril's anathematisms was condemned by the fifth ecumenical Council.

<sup>96</sup> The document containing a list of St. Cyril's presents was not published until 1873 in the *Bibliotheca Casinensis*, I, 46. It is to be found also in Hefele (III, 133), in Nau's edition of the *Livre d'Héraclide* (pp. 368 f.), and in an article by Batiffol (*Bulletin d'ancienne littérature*, 1911, p. 251), who also gives a diplomatic transcription of the document by Dom Wilmart. As Batiffol remarks (op. cit., p. 248), the memorandum of the presents offered by St. Cyril "comes to us by the hand of one of his enemies."

<sup>97</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, XIV, 475; Hefele, III, 134. Hefele refutes the arguments advanced in support of the alleged corruption by St. Cyril.

mild, moderate orthodox, Maximian. Cyril was released and, at the end of October 431, returned to Alexandria.

# Pope St. Sixtus III

Eight months later (July 27, 432) Pope Celestine died after a pontificate of nine years. His successor Sixtus, the third of that name, was a native of Rome. One of his first acts was to dedicate to the Virgin Mother of God and to decorate magnificently the church previously called the Liberian Basilica, but since then venerated under the title of St. Mary Major. "This venerable church is still, in its ensemble and despite many alterations, what it was in the fifth century. . . . The general idea of the decoration, as also the text of the dedicatory inscription, shows that it was intended to perpetuate the memory of the victory won at the Council of Ephesus by the dogma of Mary's divine maternity." 98 At the same time the new Pontiff expressed his desire that John of Antioch and his followers should be received into the communion of the Church, provided they would subscribe to the condemnations decreed by the Council of Ephesus. 99 In the same spirit of conciliation, Theodosius wrote to the dissenters with a like purpose in mind, 100

# Restoration of Peace

Most of the bishops wanted peace. The great obstacle was in the famous anathematisms of the Patriarch of Alexandria. Cyril consented to explain them. This he did in a sense excluding any Apollinarian idea. But the Easterners required that they be withdrawn. Finally an understanding was reached. The

<sup>98</sup> Duchesne, Liber pontificalis, I, 235. On the works done at St. Mary Major by order of Sixtus III, see Grisar, History of Rome, II, 33 ff., 117 ff. On the work of restoration at St. John Lateran, see *ibidem*, II, 26.

<sup>99</sup> Mansi, V, 374 f.

<sup>100</sup> Mansi, V, 278, 281, 828.

anathematisms were not disavowed, because Cyril feared that Nestorius would take advantage of such a disavowal to appear to triumph and to revive the dispute. But he agreed to subscribe to a profession of faith which was almost a copy of a declaration that the Easterners had formerly sent to the Emperor. 101 In this formula, in which it was necessary to include the precise points held in common by the two theologies of Antioch and Alexandria, by sacrificing their individual terminologies, John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria confess that "in Christ there is a union of two natures in one only Lord, in one only Son," and that "the holy Virgin is Mother of God, since the Word became man." 102 The expression "physical oneness or oneness of nature, enosis physike." which in the anathematisms had been such a source of scandal, was omitted, but the word theotokos was accepted. "The disputants—at least the calmest—eventually acknowledged that. under different formulas, they had sought to express the same things," 103 and that the prolonged quarrels of the latter years were merely the result of a misunderstanding, exploited by Nestorius' factious and turbulent spirit.

Peace was concluded between the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch. But, among the clergy and faithful of the two Churches, there was no cessation of the passions, antipathies, and prejudices stirred up or revived in the recent disputes. On Cyril's side certain ill-informed people like Isidore of Pelusium and certain real Monophysites like Acacius of Mitylene accused their leader of betraying the cause of orthodoxy. On the side of John of Antioch certain irreconcilables like Theodoret accused their patriarch with cowardly abandonment of Nestorius and alliance with a heretic. The explana-

<sup>101</sup> Mansi, V, 781-783. This declaration was probably Theodoret's work.

<sup>102</sup> Mansi, loc. cit.

<sup>103</sup> Joseph Mahé, "Les Anathématismes de saint Cyrille" in the Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, VII (1906), 542.

tions given by the two patriarchs, the energetic intervention of Theodosius II, and especially the removal of Nestorius (first interned in a monastery, then exiled to Petra in Arabia, and finally to the Oasis of Egypt), gradually led to peace.

## The Bazaar of Heracleides

In his last place of banishment, to justify his conduct Nestorius wrote the famous *Bazaar of Heracleides*.<sup>104</sup> Its discovery a few years ago should, according to some, cause a review of Nestorius' trial and should result in his rehabilitation; in short, it ought to lead history to declare that "Nestorius was not Nestorian." <sup>105</sup> But an attentive study of the document soon led scholars to doubt the absolute authenticity of the book, <sup>106</sup> or at least to question "whether the work in its present state should be attributed to Nestorius himself," <sup>107</sup> to recognize that the document teaches heretical doctrine, <sup>108</sup> and even to declare, as Harnack does, that "we should forego using the *Bazaar of Heracleides* in the history of dogma, because it lacks absolute guarantees." <sup>109</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Why was it entitled the *Basaar of Heraclides?* Because the writings that bore the name of Nestorius were condemned to be burned and because, as the Syrian translator says, "the author feared lest his own name, abhorrent to many people, would prevent the book being read." Nau's translation, p. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> This is the view maintained by Bethune-Baker in his Nestorius and his Teaching.

<sup>106</sup> J. Lebon, in the Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, XII (1911), 514-517.

<sup>107</sup> J. Labourt, in the Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétienne, 1913, p. 145.

<sup>108</sup> Jugie, Nestorius et la controverse nestorienne.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, vol. II (4th ed.). Harnack's opinion seems too radical.

#### CHAPTER III

# From the Death of Pope St. Sixtus to the Fall of the Roman Empire (440-476)

THE decline of the Roman Empire, so manifest in the preceding period, was now accelerated. The gloomy apprehensions of Augustine, Jerome, and Salvian were realized. Under the pressure of the invading barbarians, the imperial power struggled as in the convulsions of its last agony. In the East, Theodosius the Younger, abandoning the last means of rescue, broke away from the orthodox Church and favored heresy. After his death in 461, the devout Empress Pulcheria vainly tried to save everything by giving her hand and her brother's crown to an upright and courageous general, Marcian. It was too late. The dissolving power of heresy had done its work at Constantinople. In the West, the Theodosian dynasty expired with Valentinian III in 455. After him the Latin Empire still counted nine Augustuses. But five of them were raised up or overthrown by the Gothic general Ricimer. In 476 the obscure leader of a barbarian band, without even striking a blow, was able to seize a scepter which an insignificant successor of the Caesars did not attempt to defend.

Yet, during this period, learning, eloquence, and the traditions of a wise Roman policy ascended the pontifical throne in the person of St. Leo the Great. This successor of St. Peter was a theologian like Augustine, a preacher like Chrysostom, a statesman like Ambrose. He put down a formidable heresy that was backed by all the power of the Empire and he halted, at the very gates of Rome, the most terrible of the barbarians, Attila. The broken unity of that Empire, where the barbarian

element was strangely mingled with the Roman and Eastern elements, reformed around him. His work was so solid that from 450, the date of his death, until 476, the date of the definite fall of the Western Roman Empire, his first successors, Popes Hilary and Simplicius, by merely continuing that work as begun by Leo, give the impression of a new world rising up, destined to replace the ancient world, under the egis of the papacy.

#### St. Leo the Great

According to the chronological reckonings of the best scholars, Sixtus III died August 19, 440.1 After his death the unanimous voice of the people and clergy chose the deacon Leo as his successor. Although sprung from a family of Tuscan origin, he himself was born in Rome.2 There it was he received a distinguished education, as evidenced in the breadth of his knowledge and the purity of his literary style. In 418 he brought to Bishop Aurelius of Carthage the letter of Pope Zosimus condemning the Pelagians.3 Later, under Pope Celestine, it was he who persuaded John Cassian to write his book on the Incarnation.4 He enlightened Pope Sixtus regarding the intrigues of Julian of Eclanum. In 439 we find him in Gaul, commissioned, perhaps by Empress Placidia herself, to settle a dispute that arose between two generals, Aetius and Alberius, and that threatened to degenerate into civil war. This is all we know about St. Leo before his elevation to the papacy. But these details are sufficient for us to grasp his personal worth and the influence he already exercised.

<sup>1</sup> Liber pontificalis, I, 237 note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Liber pontificalis (I, 238) says, natione tuscus; but St. Prosper, who was his friend, calls him a Roman (Chronicon, Valent. et Anatol. coss.); and he himself speaks of being unable to leave "his country and the apostolic see." (Letter 31.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The "acolyte Leo," spoken of by St. Augustine (Letters 191, 194) in this connection, is probably the future Pope Leo.

<sup>4</sup> Gennadius, Lives of Illustrious Men, chap. 62: Nicene Fathers, 2d ser., III, 396.

Leo was aware of the immensity of the task confronting him and the heavy responsibilities it would lay upon him. "As the whole world," he said, "turns to the see of the Blessed Apostle Peter, and as we who occupy it are expected to show for the universal Church the love which our Lord recommended to that Apostle, our office is the more burdensome since we have the greater duties toward everybody." <sup>5</sup>

#### Heresies

What made the situation particularly painful for the Supreme Pontiff was the fact that, whereas the old Roman world, in the scheme of which the Church was established, was everywhere crumbling, most of the barbarians preparing to seize its remains were heretics or idolaters. The Vandals, who were ravaging Africa, the Alani and the Suevi, who had entered Spain in 409; the Goths, who about the same time invaded Gaul and Italy: all these were Arians. The Huns and the Heruli still professed paganism. The general excitement provoked by the invasions had scattered the formerly local heresies and schisms into different countries. The Manichaeans, driven from Africa by the Vandals, had spread into Italy. The Priscillian heresy, born in Spain, was infesting Gaul. The Pelagians were to be found more or less everywhere. The Nestorians began to spread beyond the East.

The holy Pontiff's vigilance was at first awakened by the presence in Rome of numerous Manichaeans who, it appears, were scandalizing the Eternal City by practices of shameless immorality. He had the books of the Manichaeans gathered together and burned. Obstinate individuals he turned over to the

<sup>5</sup> Sermons. V. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> In 440 the Burgundians, who were settled in Gaul since the beginning of the century, were mostly Catholics; the Lombards did not invade Italy until the middle of the sixth century.

secular arm, and he obtained from Emperor Valentinian III severe laws against the sect.<sup>7</sup>

Certain Pelagians, even after the decrees which the Council of Ephesus issued against them, continued to spread their doctrines. The Pope decided that, before they could enter the community of the faithful, they must make a formal retractation of their errors. With regard to members of the clergy who had been seduced by this heresy, he forbade that, even after their conversion, they be raised to an order higher than the one they received before their fall.

In Spain the heresy of Priscillianism continued its ravages and even won over some bishops. To Turibius, bishop of Astorga, in whom he had particular confidence, the Pope assigned the duty of assembling a general council. On this occasion he sent to all the Spanish bishops a doctrinal formula concerning the errors of Priscillianism. The disturbances of the invasion prevented a national council being held; but a partial synod met at Toledo and promulgated a symbol in eighteen anathemas.<sup>10</sup> A number of bishops who had strayed from orthodoxy returned to sound doctrine, and the faithful were secure from perversion.

## Nestorianism

It was harder to reach the Nestorians, who, when expelled from the Empire, found refuge in one of the cities protecting the eastern frontiers, the city of Edessa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> St. Leo, *Sermons*, 10; St. Prosper, *Chronicon*, year 447; Valentinian's decree of June 19, 445 (*P. L.*, LIV, 622). On the infamies of which the Manichaeans were guilty, see especially St. Leo's *Sermons*, XVI, 4, and LXXVI, 6 f.

<sup>8</sup> St. Leo, Letter 2.

<sup>9</sup> Letter 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Hefele, III, 176. Generally a second council is cited, held in Galicia (Régnier, Saint Léon le Grand, p. 32; Grisar, History of Rome, II, 48). But Tillemont (Mémoires, XV, 893) seems to prove that the mention of this council is owing to the use of the words "conciliar assembly" as a translation of "conventus," which at that time signified a territorial circumscription, a judicial district.

"There was in that city a celebrated school, which was frequented not only by the Osrhoenian subjects of the Emperor, but also by the Christian Persians subject to the Sassanides; and for this reason it was called the Persians' School. There the name and teaching of Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia were held in high esteem. True, Bishop Rabbulas, after championing the cause of John of Antioch, had passed over, during the winter of 431–432, to Cyril's side, and had even denounced to the latter Theodore of Mopsuestia as the real author of Nestorianism; nay, he had done his best to suppress Theodore's writings; but, both among the clergy and in the school, he met with a resistance which, silent as it was on account of his extreme severity, was all the more deep-seated.

"After he died (435), there ensued a reaction that brought to the episcopal see one of his opponents. Ibas was an orthodox theologian of Theodoret's type. Though he regretted very much that Nestorius did not accept the  $\theta \epsilon o \tau \acute{o} \kappa o s$ , he was a sworn enemy of St. Cyril, and a determined supporter of Theodore of Mopsuestia, whose works he had translated into Syriac and spread among his friends. Besides, he had written, probably in the year 433, to Maris, bishop of Ardaschir, a famous letter in which he gave, from an Oriental point of view, a full account of the Council of Ephesus and the agreement between John and Cyril, and strongly protested against the fanatic zeal with which Rabbulas was hunting down Theodore's writings. Later on, we shall have occasion to study that letter, which brought much trouble on Ibas.<sup>11</sup> No wonder that under such a bishop, and in spite of the presence of a comparatively few resolute Monophysites recruited from the student-body, the school of Edessa was able to keep up its Nestorian sympathies." 12

However, the Sovereign Pontiff soon perceived that the great danger was no longer in Nestorianism, but in a heresy which, on the pretext of combating it, fell into an opposite error. This was the Monophysite heresy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Cf. A. Ratel, "L'Église nestorienne en Turquie et en Perse" in the Échos d'Orient, VII (1904), 285-293, 348-353.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Tixeront, History of Dogmas, III, 51. Cf. Labourt, Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse, pp. 131-162, 247-288.

# Monophysite Heresy

The peace concluded in 433 between St. Cyril and John of Antioch gave the Eastern Church a comparative tranquillity and enabled Leo the Great to turn his first efforts against the various heresies we have just mentioned. The death of John of Antioch in 443 and that of Cyril of Alexandria the next year seemed to put a definite seal on the reconciliation of their followers. But such was not really the case. "The East and Egypt are henceforth united," Theodoret exclaimed when he heard of Cyril's death. But he added: "Hatred is dead, and the heresy is buried with it." <sup>13</sup> In spite of its peaceful appearance, this declaration was an expression of bitterness. Four years later, in 448, the dispute over the *theotokos* "suddenly flared up like the flame of a fire that is not thoroughly extinguished." <sup>14</sup>

## Eutyches

In one of those monasteries which, around Constantinople, formed a sort of crown of sacred enclosures in which the liturgical psalmody was to be heard day and night, there lived a monk who, at the time Leo the Great became pope, was about sixty-two years old.<sup>15</sup> For thirty years past, with the title of Archimandrite <sup>16</sup> (or superior), he had been ruling one of the largest monasteries, counting not less than two hundred monks. He was a strict religious of edifying life, but a narrow-minded man, without perspicacity or flexibility, quite wanting in any theological culture. Having been consecrated to God immediately after his birth and entering the religious life

<sup>13</sup> Labbe, Conciliorum collectio, V, 508.

<sup>14</sup> Thierry, Nestorius et Eutyches, p. 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Eutyches, in a letter to the Pope, says that he was 70 years old in 448. Mansi, V. 1015.

<sup>16</sup> Αρχή, μάνδρα (primacy, convent).

while still a mere child, he belonged to that class of monks who took a vow never to leave their cloister during the rest of their lives.<sup>17</sup> His name was Eutyches. His lack of education did not keep him from declaring himself emphatically, in the theological dispute dividing the Schools of Antioch and Alexandria, in favor of the latter party. And his vow seemed to him no hindrance when it came to arranging the great procession of monks that, under the leadership of another archimandrite, Dalmatius, went to the Emperor to ask for the freeing of Cyril and Memnon. He was one of those men who in their assertions are the more confident, the less they know, who act the more boldly since their limited mind is unable to perceive obstacles. If Nestorius had that knowledge which puffeth up, mentioned by St. Paul, 18 Eutyches possessed the ignorance that puffeth up. He boasted that he had defended the faith at Ephesus.<sup>19</sup> But he took no part in the Council. Those who claimed that he did, confused him with the deacon Eutyches who was in Cyril's suite.20

But he did not hesitate to say that the Council had accomplished only half of its task, and that it was for him, Eutyches, to complete it. In his view, the Fathers lacked vision and courage. Nestorius made too great allowance for Christ's humanity; the Fathers of Ephesus did not affirm His divinity strongly enough. Eutyches had read the Scriptures, and scarcely anything else. With the presumption of most half-educated men, he said that, since God made a book, He must have put in it everything we need to know. All we need do is read it and understand it; the views of the Fathers are no help. Eutyches kept repeating and stressing certain of Cyril's expressions and claimed he was defending the same ideas. But

<sup>17</sup> Labbe, IV, 199.

<sup>18</sup> See I Cor. 8: 1.

<sup>19</sup> Mansi, VI, 627.

<sup>20</sup> Tillemont, Mémoires, XV, 487.

when he was pressed, it was seen that he was distorting every one of those ideas. Cyril had said that the two natures constituted one single Christ; Eutyches, thinking he was explaining Cyril's statement, taught that before the union there had been two natures, and that after the union there remained only one nature. This was taking a double error from the words of the holy patriarch. Cyril, following St. Paul's expression, said that the first man, drawn from the earth, was earthly, and that the second man, coming from heaven, was spiritual.<sup>21</sup> Eutyches, to clarify the master's words, said that the body of Jesus had been formed of a substance eternal as God, belonging to the Divinity. Thus Eutyches was returning to the worst errors of Docetism and Gnosticism.

These declarations, delivered in a peremptory tone, misled a number of the monks of Eutyches' monastery and spread to other monasteries. Nestorianism had been the heresy of worldlings, who were incapable of rising above a mediocre, low-minded ideal. But Eutyches' doctrine was such as to please the exalted imagination of certain Eastern monks. We do, in fact, know that some of them, by a kind of spiritual pride, incited one another to be the most successful in destroying natural inclinations, as they said, without being careful enough to find out whether they were not thus lacking the virtue of discretion which the masters of the spiritual life so much recommended. Their minds were ready to accept the doctrine of a Christ who was hardly human at all.

If confined to these single influences, Eutyches' heresy would probably have been continued in the shadow of a few monasteries and would not have gone beyond the circle of some limited groups, like those ascetical fancies that spread in the Middle Ages without disturbing the higher spheres of the Church and State. But the intervention of two powerful personages suddenly gave it great publicity and made the archi-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Letter 39, P. G., LXXVII, 177 f.

mandrite of Constantinople a personage toward whom the whole East and then the entire Church turned its eyes.

The first event that made him conspicuous was the rise to power, in 441, of the eunuch Chrysaphius, whom he had held at the baptismal font and who, according to the custom of the time, looked upon him as his father. This Chrysaphius, whose noble and majestic bearing deceived the Emperor, so that he even made him his grand chamberlain and grand constable, 22 was a former slave, a barbarian by birth, who gradually rose to this high office by a rare talent for intrigue. His first care was to separate the devout Empress Pulcheria from the court, for she might become the center of a Catholic influence. His second scheme was to put his godfather Eutyches in the patriarchal see of Constantinople. In this latter project he did not succeed. In spite of pressure from the eunuch, the clergy chose, not the archimandrite of Constantinople, but a virtuous and intelligent priest, named Flavian, who had belonged to the moderate orthodox group at the Council of Ephesus. Chrysaphius never forgave Flavian for supplanting his protégé; but at the same time he resolved that, although Eutyches was not a bishop, he would make him, at any cost, thanks to the imperial power, "the chief of the bishops."

### Dioscorus of Alexandria

In 444 Eutyches found another support. To replace St. Cyril in the see of Alexandria, the choice of the people and clergy fell upon the archdeacon Dioscorus, who had accompanied Cyril to Ephesus and who until then enjoyed a certain renown.<sup>23</sup> But no sooner was the new patriarch elected than, intoxicated with the honors, he showed himself hostile to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The Oriental title was spatharios or protospatharios (from the prefix  $\pi po\tau o$  and  $\sigma \pi \acute{a}\theta \eta$ , sword).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Theodoret, Letter 60; P. G., LXXXIII, 1232.

memory of his predecessor, avaricious, ambitious, intriguing, immeasurably devoted to the cause of Monophysitism. He charged that Cyril had emptied the Alexandrian treasury to sustain his fight against Nestorius. For this reason, with the connivance of the minister, the eunuch Chrysaphius, he confiscated for himself all the property of him to whom he owed everything, reducing the Patriarch's heirs to destitution.<sup>24</sup>

By his insatiable rapacity Dioscorus was a scourge for Egypt. His episcopal visitations were as much dreaded by the provinces as an invasion of barbarians.<sup>25</sup> His exactions enabled him to pay his followers handsomely and to make himself popular in the city of Alexandria by the lavish distribution of bread and wine at ridiculously low prices. Dioscorus seems to have been a fanatical Monophysite, determined by any and every means to bring about the triumph of his doctrine. The first means was his attempt to establish his patriarchal see above all the episcopal sees of the East, even that of Constantinople. He succeeded in doing so at the time of the Robber Council of Ephesus.<sup>26</sup>

In the strength of such support, added to that of Chrysaphius, Eutyches now spoke as master, obtaining proscription or deposition, not only of all the clergy suspected of Nestorianism, but also of all the friends of Cyril, accusing them of weakness in their fight against the heresy. If we are to accept the evidence in the *Bazaar of Heracleides*, which on this point seems hardly exaggerated in its terms, "it was Eutyches who directed the affairs of the Church; he employed Flavian as a servant to execute the orders of the court; he expelled from

<sup>24</sup> Mansi, VI, 1012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Mansi, VI, 1008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> The followers of Dioscorus later honored him as a saint. The Monophysites' state of mind with regard to the celebrated patriarch may be learned by reading the *History of Dioscorus* by his disciple Theopistus. The original is in Syriac. Theopistus calls himself a contemporary of Dioscorus, but some features of the document indicate a later date.

the Church all those who did not share his views; those who aided him he promoted and gave them assistance." <sup>27</sup> Hesitating at nothing, he even wrote to Pope Leo to win him over to his ideas, denouncing the reviving peril of Nestorianism.

## Dangers of the Monophysite Heresy

The real peril, on the contrary, was in the ideas and proceedings of the truculent archimandrite. This the Pope comprehended, and endeavored so to inform Eutyches in the prudent and moderate reply he sent him.<sup>28</sup> "Under pretext of raising Christ as much as possible, of laying greater stress upon His divinity, Eutyches made of Him a being absolutely stranger to humanity." <sup>29</sup>

According to the Monophysite logic with its principles, not only was Mary not really the Mother of Christ, but there was no Redemption, since Redemption implied a mediator between God and the race of Adam. The reality of Christ Himself almost vanished.

"To leave Eutyches alone was to lay oneself open to the danger of seeing inculcated, from one end of the Empire to the other, a teaching in which the historical reality of the Gospel, often compromised by mystical fantasies, would have foundered altogether." <sup>30</sup>

Flavian, the patriarch of Constantinople, could not fail to see the seriousness of the danger. But, out of charity for the archimandrite, and from kindness of heart, he simply begged the reckless agitator "to have pity on the Churches of God, so much tried by the preceding troubles," <sup>31</sup> and to abide by

<sup>27</sup> Livre d'Héraclide, pp. 294 f.

<sup>28</sup> St. Leo, Letter 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church, III, 282.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., III, 277.

<sup>81</sup> Livre d'Héraclide, p. 295.

the peace of 433. The proud monk replied: "We did not condemn Nestorius just so as to let his doctrine spread." 32

# Theodoret of Cyrus

Eutyches' teaching encountered a more decided opponent in the person of Theodoret, bishop of Cyrus. The name of Theodoret closes the list of the great apologists of the Greek Church. He was beyond doubt one of the most striking personalities of his time. "Apologist, theologian, exegete, and historian, he was the last glory of the Christian School of Antioch. His character was attractive, stern, ardent; in it the light was ceaselessly mingled with shadows. Lacking the necessary balance, its exceptional qualities were unable to ward off storms and grief." 33 He wrote commentaries on the Scripture, an eloquent essay on Curing the Ills of the Pagans, in which he contrasts the pagan and the Christian solution of the great problems of philosophy, a History of the Monks, full of life and beauty, a History of the Church, which, making use of Rufinus and Philostorgius, is a continuation of Eusibius' History,34 two books on the Trinity and on the Incarnation.

A correct and elegant style characterizes these writings. By them the Bishop of Cyrus reveals a genuine power of intuition and a remarkable depth of theological understanding.<sup>35</sup> Through excessive fondness for the teachings of the School of Antioch, he had been one of the most violent opponents of St. Cyril's anathematisms. Even after the decision of the Council of Ephesus he continued his campaign against maxims in which he thought he detected a revival of Apollinarian-

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>33</sup> Bardenhewer, Les Pères de l'Église (French trans.), II, 237 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> A critical edition of Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical History* was published in 1911 by Léon Parmentier.

<sup>35</sup> Tixeront, op. cit., III, 3.

ism. As a sincere partisan of the union, he drew up in 433, so it seems, the formula of agreement between Cyril and John of Antioch. Yet he refused to sign it, saying he did not wish, by publicly reproving the error of Nestorius, to appear to crush an unfortunate friend.<sup>36</sup> He became reconciled with Cyril in 435, when John of Antioch dispensed him from the necessity of explicitly agreeing to the condemnation of the former patriarch of Constantinople.

No one had a clearer grasp of the falsity of Eutyches' doctrines. In 447, under the strange title, *The Beggar or the Polymorph*, he published a work in four books wherein he shows that Monophysitism is nothing but a heap of stupidities taken from a number of old heretics: Simon Magus, Cerdo, Marcion, Valentinus, Arius, Eunomius; nothing but a chimera with a hundred different shapes. He then established in Christ the immutability of the divine nature, the union of the human and the divine without confusion or mixture, and the impassibility of the divinity.<sup>37</sup> Eutyches and Dioscorus were not mentioned by name, but they saw they were meant. The following year they revenged themselves terribly against their courageous opponent.

Besides Theodoret, another foe of Monophysitism was about to rise up with equal courage. He came from the ranks of Cyril's friends. It was the Bishop of Dorylaeum, Eusebius by name. He it was who, in 428, while still a layman and a lawyer, when Nestorius in a sermon stated his opinion about the title Mother of God given to Mary, interrupted the preacher and said in a loud voice: "It is the eternal Word that was incarnate in Mary." <sup>38</sup> After receiving holy orders, along with Eutyches he fought valiantly for the defense of Cyril's doctrine. But one day, in conversation with the archimandrite,

<sup>36</sup> Bossuet, Remarques sur l'Histoire des conciles de M. Dupin, chap. 4.

<sup>87</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 372.

<sup>38</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, Adversus Nestorium, I, 5; P. G., LXXVI, 41.

he perceived the poison of the latter's ideas.<sup>39</sup> Finding persuasion powerless to bring Eutyches back to orthodoxy, he decided to seize the first opportunity to make a public denunciation of a doctrine he considered apt to pervert men's souls. This occasion presented itself toward the end of the year 448.

## Condemnation of Eutyches

A conflict between the metropolitan of Sardis and two of his suffragans, made Flavian, the patriarch of Constantinople, decide to convene (November 8, 448) a synod in his episcopal city. The first session, as it seems, sufficed to settle the affair. But just as the bishops were on the point of leaving, Eusebius handed Flavian a petition which he asked to have read. It caused great surprise. In his petition, which was cleverly worded and supplied with forceful reasons, the Bishop of Dorylaeum complained of the charges of Nestorianism which Eutyches had brought against him, and against several orthodox doctors. He asked that the archimandrite be summoned before the Council and required to offer proofs for his imputations. And Eusebius declared he was well able to prove that Eutyches did not deserve the name of Catholic, since he professed theories that were plainly heterodoxical.<sup>40</sup>

It was no easy matter to drag the old archimandrite from his monastery. Whether from simple obstinacy or from fear of seeing his ignorance exposed by a gathering of bishops whose theological learning he must have been aware of or from a desire to gain time to get word to his protectors, Eutyches kept asking for delay. Meanwhile he was moving heaven and earth for his defense. On November 22 Chrysaphius' protégé, at the end of his dilatory pretexts, finally appeared before the Council. But he came escorted by a large

<sup>39</sup> Mansi, VI, 655. Cf. Livre d'Héraclide, pp. 296-298.

<sup>40</sup> Mansi, VI, 651-654.

number of monks and soldiers. The latter said they were under orders to protect his freedom. At the same time Magnus the silentarius entered the meeting hall and, in the name of the Emperor, read a letter ordering that the patrician Florens should be present at the sessions that discussed any matters of the faith.<sup>41</sup>

Great excitement prevailed. In answer to various questions, Eutyches' replies were contradictory or inconsistent, betraying his ignorance and warped intelligence. After confessing the existence of two natures in Christ, he then declared he admitted them only before their union. After asserting that Christ was consubstantial with Mary, and that Mary was of the same substance that we are, he corrected himself and said that the body of Jesus is a divine body, then added that, nevertheless, if they wanted him to declare that the body of Jesus was of the same substance as ours, he would do so. "So, then," exclaimed Flavian, at the end of his patience, "it is from necessity and not of your own will that you confess your faith." <sup>42</sup>

The discussion showed no sign of coming to a conclusion. Then someone asked that, in order to terminate it, the accused should anathematize whatever was contrary to the Catholic doctrine set forth at the beginning of the session. "I will do nothing of the sort," Eutyches replied. Thereupon the whole Council shouted: "Let him be anathema!" Flavian in the name of the bishops and archimandrites present, then pronounced the following sentence: "Eutyches, quondam priest and archimandrite, is, by the acts of the preceding sessions and by his present declarations, fully convicted of being imbued with the error of Valentinian and Apollinaris. . . . Therefore, with tears and sighs for his loss, we declare, on behalf of Jesus Christ, outraged by these blasphemies, that he is deprived of any sacerdotal dignity, excluded from our communion, and

<sup>41</sup> Mansi, VI, 730-734.

<sup>42</sup> Labbe, IV, 226.

deposed from the government of his monastery. All those who hereafter knowingly hold converse with him or associate with him will be subject to excommunication." <sup>48</sup>

The blow struck the heresiarch with full force, but it did not crush him. As the bishops were leaving the meeting, Eutyches declared to the patrician Florens that he appealed to Leo the bishop of Rome. As he left the place the people, informed of his condemnation, cursed him as he passed. He addressed a petition to Theodosius. Against the sentence decreed by the Synod and against the attendant consequences, he appealed to the Pope and to the Emperor.

His letter to the Pope was cleverly conceived. Its wording was obsequious. But, on the doctrinal question, it abounded in things to be understood though not expressed. And Flavian acquainted the Roman Pontiff with the affair by sending him a detailed account. The Bishop of Rome replied to Flavian that he was preparing, on the disputed question, a complete exposition of the Catholic teaching. Chrysaphius, who nourished a special grudge against Flavian, 44 prejudiced the Emperor. The latter kept vexing the Bishop of Constantinople, vainly trying, by inquiries and synods, to invalidate the steps taken against Eutyches. After exhausting all expedients, in the spring of 449, at the instigation of Chrysaphius, Dioscorus, and Eutyches, Emperor Theodosius directed the metro-

<sup>48</sup> Mansi, VI, 748.

<sup>44</sup> Flavian, by accepting an office which Chrysaphius coveted for his protégé Eutyches, had vexed Chrysaphius, and had hurt his avarice. It was a general custom for every newly elected bishop to send to the Emperor's representatives, as a token of welcome, some "eulogiae" or blessed bread. But gradually the cupidity of the imperial agents transformed these offerings into presents of money. Flavian, wishing to oppose this abuse, sent to the court of Theodosius merely some wheat bread. Chrysaphius sent him word that "it is not bread that is sent to the emperor, but gold." The archbishop replied that the gold which the bishops possessed belonged to God and the poor. This reply but increased Chrysaphius' rage. (Nicephorus, Ecclesiastical History, XIV, 47.)

politans of his Empire to repair to Ephesus, the first of the next August, along with some of their suffragans, there to hold an ecumenical council.<sup>45</sup>

# The Robber Council of Ephesus (449)

Soon various unusual measures convinced those who still entertained any illusions about it, that it was not a council that was about to be held, but that a "robbery" was going to be committed. Theodoret, bishop of Cyrus, whose anti-Monophysite tendencies were known and whose theological knowledge was dreaded, received word that he must not attend the Council. 46 Ibas, the bishop of Edessa, considered one of the staunchest in sustaining the Antiochene Christology, was imprisoned. The presidency of the Council was given ex officio by the Emperor to the terrible patriarch of Alexandria. Dioscorus. Theodosius, under Chrysaphius' advice, went further in the way of violence and illegality. A Syrian archimandrite, Barsumas (or Barsauma),47 from the frontiers of Persia, was made grand executor of the laws against Nestorianism. He had been seen, at the head of an armed phalanx of real bandits, who were monks only in name and dress, hunting Nestorians in the valleys near the Euphrates, sacking the churches, and burning the monasteries that did not appear to him orthodox. The Emperor decided that Barsumas, though not knowing a word of Greek, should be present at the deliberations and that, though he was only a priest, he should have a vote in the Council.48

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Mansi, VI, 588 ff. The imperial letter of convocation, drawn up, as usual, in the name of the two emperors, Theodosius II and Valentinian III, was dated March 30, 449. (Hefele, III, 222.)

<sup>46</sup> Labbe, Conciliorum collectio, IV, 110 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> This Barsumas, an archimandrite, should not be confused with another Barsumas, who was bishop of Nisibis.

<sup>48</sup> Labbe, IV, 275, 530,

## St. Leo's Tome

They could not avoid inviting Pope Leo. Perhaps, knowing that Attila was at the gates of Rome, they counted on his being unable to leave the Eternal City. Furthermore, even should he come in person or by his legates, his influence and his voice would surely be smothered by the assembly so artfully and cleverly composed. If the friends of Eutyches reasoned thus, they were not taking into account the energy and the lofty wisdom of the Sovereign Pontiff. When the invitation to the Council reached him (May 12), Pope Leo had completely drawn up the important exposition of the faith at which he had been working for some time. We refer to the celebrated dogmatic letter later known as *St. Leo's Tome to Flavian*. Bossuet calls it

"the divine letter to Flavian, which was the admiration of the whole Church, wherein the mystery of Jesus Christ is so sublimely and so distinctly explained, that the Fathers of this great Council cried out at each word, 'Peter has spoken by the mouth of Leo.' "50"

This letter, subsequently approved by the fourth ecumenical council, would have the value of a symbol. The Pope communicated it to the members of the Council by his three legates: Bishop Julius of Puteoli, the priest Renatus of the title of St. Clement, and the deacon Hilary, who would one day succeed him on the papal throne. Setting forth in vivid style the Catholic Christology, founded on tradition, he explained with inimitable clearness and exactness the oneness of person and the duality of natures in Christ, thus rejecting at one stroke the error of Eutyches and that of Nestorius. "All know," says the Pope, "and confess to believe in God, the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord,

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., IV, 103.

<sup>50</sup> Bossuet, History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches, XIII, 20.

who was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. By these three propositions almost every heresy is overthrown. This only-begotten eternal Son of the eternal Father was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. . . . The properties of both natures and substances remained uninjured, and united in one person . . . the one Mediator between God and man on the one side could die, on the other could not die. In the inviolate and perfect nature of a true man, true God is born, complete in His own (in His Godhead) and complete in ours (in the manhood). . . . For this reason that the two natures constitute only one person, we read that the Son of God took flesh of the Virgin; and also, that the Son of God was crucified and buried. . . . Eutyches' proposition that the only-begotten Son of God before the union had two natures. is as impious as the other, that after the Incarnation there was only one nature." 51

The Council of Ephesus opened on August 8, 449, in St. Mary's Church. Dioscorus presided. One of the first acts of the papal legates was to call for the reading of the Pope's letter. "Very well," said Dioscorus. Taking the document in his hands, he very adroitly put it out of sight; then he handed the secretary another document. This was the imperial letter ordering that the monk Barsumas be admitted to the ranks of the Fathers of the Council. Such flagrant irregularity was a foretaste of other irregularities that were going to be committed. Without giving the legates time to protest, an imperial commissioner took the floor and declared that whoever should alter the true faith would receive a double condemnation: that of God and that of the Emperor.<sup>52</sup> Dioscorus at once interpreted this command as meaning that nothing must be added to the declarations of Nicaea and Ephesus. Addressing the members of the Council, he said: "Do you want to change the

<sup>51</sup> St. Leo the Great, Letter 28, quoted in Hefele, III, 233 f.

<sup>52</sup> Mansi, VI, 620.

faith of our fathers?" Some of his followers shouted: "Anathema to anyone who would change the faith of our fathers." "Do you want," continued Dioscorus, "to add anything to the faith defined at Ephesus and Nicaea?" "Anathema," cried the same voices, "to anyone who would change the faith of Ephesus and Nicaea." The secretaries wrote down that such were the shouts of the whole assembly. But the Council of Chalcedon later protested against this outrageous falsification. 58

## Illegal Depositions

The question of the faith having been thus settled, the only work left to be done was "a slaughter of bishops." 54 The Council decreed the deposition of Ibas bishop of Edessa, Theodoret bishop of Cyrus, and others not so well known, such as Daniel bishop of Haran, whose only crime was being Ibas' nephew, Aquilinus bishop of Byblos, condemned for the sole reason that he had refused to attend, Sophronius bishop of Constantina (Tella), accused, on the so-called testimony of a child, of engaging in practices of magic, but in reality suspect because he was related to the Bishop of Edessa. "None of the accused was heard or summoned to appear. From the beginning to the end of the Synod, the gravest sentences were pronounced without any form of trial being observed." 55 A shouting populace invaded the church and kept interrupting the deliberations with outcries, such as: "Ibas to the flames! Theodoret to the gallows! He who professes the two natures, let him be cut in two! As he divides, let him be divided!" Then it was the turn of the Council members to shout. "Long life to the Synod!" they cried; "long life to the Emperors! The

<sup>53</sup> Hefele, III, 244.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Paulin Martin, "Le Brigandage d'Ephèse," in the Revue des questions historiques, XVI (1874), 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Holy Ghost has spoken by Dioscorus. Those who keep silent are heretics." These last words give us to understand that, of the 135 members of the assembly,56 some did not share the ideas of the Patriarch of Alexandria. In this number were Flavian, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the papal legates. The deacon Hilary was especially conspicuous by his unvielding energy. When the Acts of Nicaea and Ephesus had been read, Hilary exclaimed: "All that is in perfect agreement with the letter of the Apostolic See. Have it read and you will see." Again the demand was ignored. When Dioscorus said: "Know that the Emperors will be informed of everything done here today," Flavian cried out: "I appeal from you." 57 And Hilary, dominating the uproar of the assembly with a loud voice, immediately uttered the consecrated formula: "Contradicitur," that is, "Objection is made to your decision."

This word, so clearly reminding the assembly of the supreme authority of the Bishop of Rome, inflamed their passions. Dioscorus, his eyes gleaming, became excited; he was beside himself. Several of the bishops—Onesiphorus of Iconium, Maximian of Synosades, and others—on their knees besought him to use moderation, but in vain.<sup>58</sup> Annoyed by this scene and feigning that he was being attacked by those who were trying to calm him, he called out: "Where are the counts?" At this call, the two representatives of the Emperor (Elpidius and Eulogius) had the doors of the church thrown open. A detachment of soldiers, together with the rabble of Barsuma's companions, poured into the church. Hilary, who was keeper of the tablets on which Flavian had written his declaration of appeal, managed to escape during the tumult.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> This is the figure given in the Acts of the Council.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> The text of the appeal which Flavian and Eusebius of Dorylaeum addressed to St. Leo was unknown until 1882. See Grisar, *History of Rome*, II, 54.

<sup>58</sup> Hardouin, Conciliorum collectio, II, 213.

Flavian sought to do likewise. But, just as he was about to slip through the doorway, Dioscorus reached him and struck him in the face. Barsuma with his bandits was there, shouting: "Kill, kill." <sup>59</sup> Flavian was thrown down and trampled on. Three days later he died in consequence of this infamous violence. <sup>60</sup> The Church honors him as a martyr. His feast day is February 18.

Pope Leo, two years afterwards, in a letter stigmatized this assembly with the name by which it has since been known in history, "latrocinium ephesinum," the Robber Council of Ephesus." <sup>61</sup>

# Council of Chalcedon (451)

With no small difficulty the brave deacon Hilary evaded the pursuit of his enemies and returned to Rome. It is thought he reached there at the beginning of October. When he related to the Pope the detestable scenes he had witnessed, Leo was deeply afflicted and enraged. He said: "What has been done with no regard for justice and contrary to the authority of all the canons, possesses no sort of validity." 62

From all sides the clergy and faithful looked to Rome. We may say that the Patriarch Flavian expressed the feeling of the whole Church when he said, in the appeal entrusted to Hilary: "I beg your Holiness to come to the East to help, in its distress, the Truth which the Fathers planted in the sweat of their brow. . . . When I appealed in the Council to the Apostolic Throne of Peter, the chief of the Apostles, they sur-

<sup>59 &</sup>quot;Barsumas ipse instabat et dicebat: Occide." Labbe, IV, 524.

<sup>60</sup> Theophanis, Chronographia, P. G., CVIII, 262.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> St. Leo, Letter to Pulcheria, June 20, 451. The Acta of this miserable synod were not known to Hefele, Hergenröther, or Amedée Thierry. They were discovered at London and published in 1873. See Martin, "Le Brigandage d'Ephèse d'après les actes du concile récemment découverts" in the Revue des questions historiques, XVI (1874), 1-53.

<sup>62</sup> Letter 45. Cf. Letters 85, 89.

rounded me with soldiers and even prevented me from taking sanctuary at the holy altar. . . . Arise, then, defend the Faith of God, and restore the Church's laws. Send letters both to the people for their enlightenment and to the Emperor to explain to him the situation. . . . A Council summoned from both West and East should bring help in the ways God will suggest to you." <sup>68</sup>

The convoking of a council under his effective presidency was in fact the intention of the great Pontiff. But he foresaw the difficulties that might arise on the Emperor's side. And they did. In the meantime the Pope required that the Patriarch Anatolius, who had been elected to replace Flavian under the influence of Theodosius, should give full and entire approval to his dogmatic letter. During the winter of 450 the imperial family of the West made a journey to Rome. This gave an opportunity to advance the negotiations.

New light has been thrown on this last point by the discovery (in 1893) of certain unpublished documents. In February, 450, Emperor Valentinian III came to Rome with his wife Eudoxia (daughter of Theodosius) and his mother Galla Placidia. Valentinian decided to pray at the tomb of the Apostle Peter on the day of the feast of St. Peter's Chair (February 22). The Pope was there and, in the presence of the imperial court, preached a sermon marked by great loftiness of thought. "What a sight this is," he said. "An emperor, wearing a crown, with his suite of noble warriors comes and bows his head before the tomb of a sinner. The rich are greedy to enrich themselves with the merits of the poor. A poor, lowly man receives from Christ the government of the greatest city in the world." 64 Before the imperial family left St. Peter's,

<sup>63</sup> The text of this letter was discovered in 1882 by Amelli in a manuscript of the Chapter of Novare. It was published by Grisar in his *Analecta romana*, I, 322 ff. This passage is quoted in Grisar, *History of Rome*, no. 234.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> This homily, discovered in a manuscript of the British Museum, was published in part by Dom Morin in the *Anecdota maredsolana*, I (1893), 409.

Pope Leo set forth to them the misery of the Eastern Church. The Pontiff's emotion was so great that his voice was choked by sobs. He implored the sovereigns to influence Emperor Theodosius II, that he might favor the holding of an ecumenical council in Italy.

The Council opened on October 8, 451, under Marcian and Pulcheria, the successors of Theodosius II, not at Nicaea, where the Pope wanted it held, but at Chalcedon, where the new emperor convoked it somewhat unexpectedly.

#### Decisions of the Council

The East had never witnessed so imposing a gathering. About six hundred bishops were present. The representatives of the Roman Pontiff occupied the place of honor and, in accord with the Pope's wish, guided the deliberations. The sovereigns of the East agreed that the Council should take as its task, "for the welfare of the faith and the peace of the Church, to reach decisions in the sense indicated by the Bishop of Rome and to pass judgment under his authority." 66

The two chief decisions of the Council of Chalcedon were the following: I. the drawing up of a dogmatic decree, a rather developed statement of Christian faith regarding the Incarnation, in which statement were inserted in full, as unchangeable rules of faith, the symbols of Nicaea and Constantinople; <sup>67</sup> 2. the solemn acceptance of Leo's celebrated dogmatic letter to Flavian, amidst the unanimous shouts of: "Peter has spoken by Leo." This letter would henceforth be regarded as "an unquestionable rule of faith." <sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> St. Leo, Letters 89-95.

<sup>66</sup> Letters 77, 78.

<sup>67</sup> Mansi, VII, 108-118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Jaffé, no. 1381. The authority of this decision is expressed in the beautiful legend which was current at Rome in the time of St. Gregory the Great and was handed down during the Middle Ages. The legend relates that Pope Leo placed the

The Council of Chalcedon also promulgated some disciplinary decisions. Its 28th canon was the only one that elicited a protest from Rome. It repeated and aggravated the irregular canon of the second ecumenical council, which raised the episcopal see of Constantinople to the detriment of the old patriarchates of the East. Pope Leo was asked, by the Council and by the Emperor, to approve that conciliar decision. His reply bears witness to the high authority of the Bishop of Rome with regard to an ecumenical council. He says: "Whatever has been settled contrary to the decrees of the Nicene Council, we declare void, and the same, by the power of Blessed Peter the Apostle, we hereby quash." 69 He urged the patriarchs of the East, affected by this decision of the Council, openly to claim their traditional rights. This was not merely a question of commonplace rivalry between two cities. The issue was higher than that: Alexandria and Antioch held their primacy from the memory of the Apostle Peter; Constantinople's only claim rested on the presence of an emperor. "The Church of Alexandria," wrote Leo, "must not forfeit aught of the dignity which it received through the disciple of Peter, St. Mark the Evangelist. . . . The Church of Antioch, where St. Peter bestowed the Faith on those who were first to be called Christians, shall not lose her privilege. . . . The highest honor for each is the saving of his rights." 70

The malice of the Eutychians profited by the Pope's attitude on the 28th canon, by representing him as opposed to the Council.<sup>71</sup> He answered these calumnies by confirming the great work of the Council against the Monophysites in a special encyclical (March 21, 453). Gelasius I, a few years

letter on the tomb of St. Peter and gave himself up to fasting and prayer for forty days, asking the Prince of the Apostles to correct it by his own hand. At the end of this period, Leo took the letter again, now improved by St. Peter himself.

<sup>69</sup> Letter 105, quoted in Grisar, op. cit., no. 236.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>71</sup> Letter 114.

later, was able to say: "Everything depends on the authority of the Apostolic See. What it has ratified in the decisions of the Council receives the force of obligation; what it has rejected is without force." <sup>72</sup>

Eutychianism, henceforth convicted as an explicit heresy, continued to live in Egypt and, here and there, in the neighboring provinces of Arabia and Persia. The doctrine, instead of becoming attenuated, grew more solid. The Monophysites, no longer having to exercise caution, exaggerated their theories. They openly separated from the "Cyrillians," on whose backing they lately relied. At the death of Dioscorus they proclaimed him a martyr and venerated some of his writings on a level with the Gospel. The Nestorians did in like manner. "Obliged to withdraw into Persia, they openly resumed the positions they had abandoned in the West. They raised up as a standard the name of Nestorius, about whom silence had been maintained since 433. By way of retaliation, there was no longer any question about the theotokos, and they spoke more clearly of the duality of the hypostases. This evolution toward more rigid Nestorianism showed itself between 457 and 482. It was consummated in 489 at the time of the definite closing of the School of the Persians at Edessa by the Monophysite Cyrus, followed by the formation of the School of Nisibis." 73

For Monophysitism 74 as for Nestorianism, the sovereign

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Gelasius, *De anathematis vinculo (P. L.*, LIX, 107). On the Council of Chalcedon, see Jules Bois, art. "Chalcédoine (Concile de)," in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, II, 2190–2208. Harnack (Dogmengeschichte, p. 368) is of the opinion that a majority of the Council of Chalcedon expressed themselves in the sense of St. Cyril's anathematisms and even of Monophysitism. But a simple reading of the Acts of the Council suffices to refute this hypothesis. A detailed refutation will be found in Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse*, pp. 257–259.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Labourt, op. cit., p. 261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Lebon (*Monophysisme sévérien*) shows that if we are to follow, in detail and without fear of error, the history of Monophysitism, we would do well to distinguish Monophysitism properly so called from Eutychianism. Doctrinally Monophysitism is something very complex. It goes beyond the questions of Christology and extends

decisions produced their result. It is true that certain rebellious minds, tearing asunder all the veils and abandoning all ambiguity, went to extremes. But at least all misunderstanding was henceforth removed. Heresy bore its indelible mark. With increased attachment, all faithful souls turned to Rome as to the ever-living center of orthodox teaching.

#### St. Leo the Great

With his political sense, the justice and depth of which the future would prove, Pope Leo resolved to draw a practical lesson from the lamentable events that had just taken place in the East. To forestall a return of such crises, he established at Constantinople an institution that would later play an important part in religious international politics. Julian bishop of Cos was appointed his chargé d'affaires in the Eastern capital. Henceforth all important negotiations with the court and the Eastern bishops would be transacted by him. He would send detailed reports about the ecclesiastical affairs of his jurisdiction. This was the origin of the *apocrisiarii* or papal legates at Constantinople. They led to the institution of apostolic nunciatures.

Leo was also able to take advantage, for the good of the Church and civilization in general, of a practice which obliged the popes to express their sentiments of deference and devotedness to the sovereigns on the occasion of important events occurring in the Church or in the State. In the midst of polite compliments and customary literary phrases, which he always observed most carefully, he never failed to mention their praiseworthy deeds in the life of the monarchs, and he also took a firm stand against what might be blameworthy.

This conduct was particularly evident in the affair of to the theology of the Trinity. Eutychianism is a sort of Monophysitism embracing only every doctrine that compromises the immutability of the Word by atacking the reality and integrity of Christ's humanity. Cf. Jugie, art. "Eutychianisme" in Vacant's Dictionnaire de théologie, VI, 1596.

Timothy Aelurus. Emperor Marcian, desiring to win back the dissenters by negotiations and complacency that compromised the dogma, ended only in augmenting their boldness. A group of fanatical Monophysites, headed by a priest Timothy, surnamed the Cat (Aelurus), and a deacon Peter, called Mongus (the Hoarse), was disturbing the Church of Alexandria. They opposed the doctrine of the two natures, the Pope's dogmatic letter, and the Council of Chalcedon, and carried on unrelenting war against the Patriarch Proterius, who had to depose their two leaders. But on Holy Thursday (March 28, 457), an enraged mob poured into the basilica while he was officiating, massacred the bishop, and dragged his body through the city, while Timothy Aelurus took the place of the slain bishop. Emperor Marcian punished the assassins that could be found, but showed mildness in his attitude toward the usurping patriarch.

The Pope reminded Marcian of his duties to the Church. "I speak," he said, "to the Byzantine sovereign with the freedom which the faith gives me. The imperial power has been given you, not only to rule the world, but especially to defend the Church. Heretics should never be allowed to question decisions of the councils. With all the more reason should they be prevented from violently seizing episcopal sees like the see of Alexandria." The letter contained expressions of esteem for the new Emperor, who was won by the Pope's energy and goodness. Timothy Aelurus was put out of the see he had usurped, and Leo the Great sent a letter of felicitation to Proterius' lawful successor, Timothy Salophaciolus. "Imitate the Good Shepherd," he wrote. "As a good and zealous pastor of souls, labor to gather them all under the same roof." This is the last extant letter of St. Leo."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Letter 156.

<sup>76</sup> I. e., "The White Turban."

<sup>77</sup> Letter 171.

"The style of Leo's chancery was largely imitated by Papal secretaries in later times, particularly so long as Greco-Roman culture prevailed, though occasionally they spoiled it by paying too great attention to Byzantine taste. An effort was also made to follow the tradition of the fine dignified rhythm of Leo's language, particularly the metrical movement at the end of the sentences, called after his name Cursus Leoninus." <sup>78</sup>

#### St. Leo's Reforms

This great Pope's correspondence with the episcopacy shows him attentive to the smallest details that might disturb good order and peace. Writing to the bishops of Aquileia and Ravenna, he regulates the question of marriages troubled by the captivity of husband or wife, questions that arose from taking part in the idolatrous practices of the barbarians, and the question of giving the sacraments to victims of the persecution.<sup>79</sup> In Africa he watched over the observance of the canon laws in the election of bishops.80 In Gaul he strengthened the vicariate apostolic of the bishop of Arles by declaring that this prelate "not only governs his province with his own authority, but also exercises a power of protection over all Gaul by virtue of a delegation from the Holy See." 81 In Illyricum, on the contrary, the Pope protected the rights of the bishops against the vicar of the Apostolic See, Anastasius, who was pitiless in his exactions. Nowhere did St. Leo use more solemn and forceful language than in the letter he sent to Anastasius, reminding him of his duty.82

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Grisar, op. cit., no. 237. On the cursus leoninus, see Noël Valois, Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, 1881, pp. 161 f., and Léonce Couture, "Le Cursus dans la liturgie et la littérature" in the Revue des questions historiques, LI (1892), 253 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Letters 159, 166.

<sup>80</sup> Letter 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Letter 66. In the Middle Ages these powers conferred on the archbishops of Arles were a matter of prolonged discussion.

<sup>82</sup> Letter 3. Cf. letters 5, 6, 13. A complete picture of St. Leo the Great's work of administration and reform would also call for the study of the Councils of Orange,

The monasteries were likewise the object of the Pontiff's solicitude. Certain turbulent and fanatical Eastern monks frequently gave their support to heresy. Others, mindful of nothing but the fame of their austerities and outward mortifications, engaged in all sorts of extravagances. Leo was vigilant in repressing these two abuses. He employed all his authority to silence Palestinian monks who had been led astray by the doctrine of Nestorius and Eutyches. He decreed severe penalties for moral failings of the monks. He decreed severe penalties for moral failings of the monks. In the neighborhood of Constantinople, at the end of the fifth century, enormous monasteries housed legions of monks.

Near Antioch some ascetics, to cut themselves off more completely from the world, lived on the top of columns as solitaries, "standing up in the open air without protection against rain, wind, and the vicissitudes of the seasons." <sup>86</sup> These were the Stylites. The most celebrated of them was Simeon, who at first was a shepherd, then a monk in a monastery, then, to gratify his liking for austerities, he decided to live alone. Finally, to escape from the bother of visitors who were attracted by the fame of his penance, he had a masonry column built and on this he installed himself. In this fashion he lived for thirty-seven years on different columns: the first one was ten feet high; but, according to the report of Theodoret, who saw it, the last one was fifty feet high. <sup>87</sup> Such a way of living at first surprised and even scandalized the faith-

Vaison, Arles, Rome, Besançon, other councils of Gaul and Britain, and the Eastern Councils of Ephesus, Antioch, Berytus, Tyre, and Hierapolis, which were held in his pontificate. See Hefele, III, 159 ff.

<sup>83</sup> Jassé, no. 500. Cf. Delau, "Monastères palestiniens du V° siècle" in the Bulletin d'ancienne littérature, 1899, pp. 233 ff., 269 ff.

<sup>84</sup> Jaffé, no. 544.

<sup>85</sup> J. Pargoire, "Les Débats du monachisme à Constantinople" in the Revue des questions historiques, LXV (1899), 67-143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> H. Delchaye, "Les Stylites" in the Revue des questions historiques, LVII (1895), 55.

<sup>87</sup> Evagrius, History of the Church, I, 13.

ful and the clergy. But the Stylite's virtue was so great and his words so wise that soon his sway over the masses was allpowerful. This man, who sought merely to flee from the world and draw near to God by prayer, soon exercised a social influence, not simply over his fellow-Syrians, but over visitors who came from every country. To those whom curiosity drew in throngs to the foot of his column he preached the truth of Christianity so gently and clearly that they went home converted. Disputes were brought to him for judgment. At his word creditors forgave the poor their debts, masters freed their slaves. The dye-workers of Antioch, oppressed by the prefect, came to him with their complaints; Leo I consulted him about the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon: Genevieve of Nanterre, the celebrated virgin of Gaul, communicated with him. Simeon had many imitators who, after his example, exercised a salutary influence around them.88

### St. Leo and Attila

"The grand work which Leo achieved in the Church can be properly estimated only by taking into account all he did for the good of the State and of society. His bold and imposing encounter with Genseric saved the lives of the Romans and delivered the city from destruction by the Vandals, even though it was unavailing to prevent a partial sack. His meeting with Attila on the Mincio won him the credit of having delivered Italy from the Hunnish hordes threatening to overrun the distracted country." 89

Attila, the Scourge of God, had led westward his hordes of Huns, who, united with the Ostrogoths under the command of Walamir, and the Gepidae, who were marching under the

<sup>88</sup> On the stylites, see Father Delehaye's important article, "Les Stylites" in the Revue des questions historiques, LVII, 52-103.

<sup>89</sup> Grisar, History of Rome, II, 61.

orders of Ardaric, had reached the very heart of Gaul. The battle of the Catalaunian Fields (i. e., the Plains of Chalon) in the summer of 451 obliged the barbarian army to retreat. But, after wintering in Pannonia, the terrible king of the Huns appeared in northern Italy, ready to avenge the disgrace of his defeat. Actius had failed to protect the Alpine passes. The road to Rome was now open before Attila. Actius and Valentinian for a while thought of fleeing to the East. But the very cowardice of such a plan made them abandon it.

After long deliberations, it seemed "to the Emperor, the Senate, and the Roman people" that the best thing to do was to send a deputation to the barbarian king to propose terms of peace. Pope Leo I, placing all his trust in God, undertook the difficult mission. He set out, accompanied by the Consul Avienus, the Prefect Trigetius, and certain others, with full powers for the negotiations. The embassy met the Hun, who was the terror of the world, in his camp not far from Mantua, at the confluence of the Po and the Mincio. "All fell out," says St. Prosper,

"as Leo had expected in his reliance upon the divine aid, which never forsakes the pious in their boldest enterprises. This conference with the Pope moved the dreaded foe to compassion. He expressed his pleasure at receiving a visit from the Supreme Pontiff. After this he withdrew his forces beyond the Danube. . . . If, as is possible, Leo the Great ordered the superstitious monarch to spare the hallowed walls of Rome, broadly hinting at the power of the great Prince of the Apostles, whose tomb they protected, this would have been in perfect keeping with his character. At any rate, he returned to his flock with the glad tidings that his mission had been a brilliant success. . . . Had Attila and his Huns succeeded in overrunning the West, all nations would have been plunged into savagery." 90

<sup>90</sup> Idem, I, 94 f.

### St. Leo's Sermons

Pope St. Leo the Great, by his works was a great statesman, a great administrator, a great defender of Christian civilization. But he was also, by his words and writings, a Father of the Church.

We possess 117 sermons attributed to St. Leo. 91 Of these. 97 are authentic, and 20 are apocryphal or doubtful. Literary critics have admired their pure classical form; theologians have praised their depth of thought. 92 All great pulpit orators have drawn from them. Bossuet and Bourdaloue owe to St. Leo many of their finest oratorical passages. Both of them used his beautiful exposition of the mystery of the Passion. Says Bossuet: "It is the mystery of Christianity that the great Pope St. Leo so wonderfully explains by this doctrine: There is, says he, this difference between the death of Christ and the death of others—the latter is individual, that of Christ is universal: that is, each of us is individually subject to death, and merely pays his own debt in dying; only Christ died really for others, because He owed nothing for Himself. This is why His death concerns all of us, and He is the only one in whom all men are buried, in whom all also are risen." 93 Bourdaloue, who in his four great Passion sermons and his ten Exhortations on the same subject, owes to St. Leo, "not only the beauty of the details he there spreads out, but the great ideas on which they are based." 94 A sermon that is considered one of his masterpieces, he ends as follows: "Therefore we con-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> The 116 sermons in the Ballerini edition (*P. L.*, LIV, 137–522), and one sermon discovered and published by Dom Morin (*Anecdota maredsolana*, I, 409).

<sup>92</sup> Maury, Essai sur l'éloquence de la chaire, II, 221; Fénelon, Dialogues sur l'éloquence; Ceillier, Histoire des auteurs sacrés, XV, 515.

<sup>93</sup> Bossuet, Sermon pour le jour de Pâques, 1660 (Lebarcq ed., III, 392). Cf St. Leo, Sermon, De Passione Domini (sermon 12, no. 3). Bossuet had already taken the same idea from St. Leo in a sermon in 1653 for the fifth Sunday after Pentecost. Œuvres oratoires de Bossuet (Lebarcq-Levesque ed., 1914, I, 377 f.)

<sup>94</sup> Barruel, Journal ecclesiastique, February 1788, p. 153.

clude, with St. Leo, that the Passion of the Son of God was the universal penance, the public and authorized penance, the perfect and consummated penance for all the sins of mankind." <sup>95</sup>

St. Leo's sermons are nearly all full of such thoughts. His language is clear and precise; his thought, limpid and deep. We feel the spirit of Christ living therein in its fulness. We also find valuable allusions to the moral life of Rome in the middle of the fifth century. He denounces those nominal Christians who think they are real Christians because the world they live in has abandoned the worship of idols, and he shows that it is possible to be an idolater with the appearances of a Christian.96 He warns his hearers against the Alexandrian merchants who had just arrived in Rome and were trying to spread Monophysite ideas.97 He fights the superstition of those who, before entering the porch of St. Peter's Basilica, when they reach the top of the steps, turn facing the square and salute the sun. 98 After the departure of Genseric and his Vandals, he refutes those who, through a remnant of idolatry, attributed the preservation of Rome to the stars.99 He endeavored to show that all thanks are due to the Lord God and to the intercession of the Apostle St. Peter. When he speaks to the grandeurs of Christian Rome, his words assume particular magnificence. On June 29, the feast of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, he addressed the Eternal City thus: "O Rome, you who were a teacher of error, by these two saints have you received the Gospel. They are the ones who raised you to this glory of being the holy nation, the chosen

<sup>96</sup> Bourdaloue, *Premier sermon sur la Passion*, part I, in his Œuvres complètes (Lyons ed., 1864, IV, 212).

<sup>96</sup> Sermon 36.

<sup>97</sup> Sermon 96.

<sup>98</sup> Sermon 27.

<sup>99</sup> Sermon 80.

people, the priestly and royal city, the head of the universe, and the glory of extending your religious authority beyond the limits of your earthly dominion. However far so many victories have carried your power on earth and sea, the empire which warfare has won for you does not equal that which Christian peace has brought under your sway." <sup>100</sup>

"The correspondence of Leo amounts to 173 letters. Of these 143 bear the name of the Pope, and cover the period from 442 to 460. They are all official in character; most of them were evidently not written by Leo himself, but are the product of the papal chancery." 101

The countless occupations of his Apostolic office did not allow St. Leo to undertake great writings. But he encouraged their composition. It was under his inspiration that St. Prosper of Aguitaine, between 445 and 455, wrote his Chronicon vulgare and his Chronicon integrum, the second half of which, in a very clear and concise form, is one of the best sources for the history of the fifth century. 102 In St. Leo's pontificate Socrates and Sozomen wrote their Ecclesiastical Histories in Greek. The former, more critical in the use of sources and gifted with a firmer historical sense for grasping the chain of events, published his work between 439 and 443. The latter, making extensive use of Socrates' work, sometimes copies it verbatim, but often also adds to it. Both happily corrected the Ecclesiastical History of the Eunomian Philostorgius. This *History*, which appeared after 425 and before the pontificate of Leo the Great, was, according to Photius, "not so much a history as a eulogy of the Arian heretics.

<sup>100</sup> Sermon 82.

<sup>101</sup> Bardenhewer, Patrology, p. 524.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Léonce Couture, "Saint Prosper d'Aquitaine" in the Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique (Toulouse), 1900, pp. 269 ff., 1901, pp. 33 ff.

# St. Leo and the Liturgy

Liturgy and Christian art owe much to Leo the Great. Difficulties arose again in the fourth and fifth centuries about the celebration of Easter. St. Leo desired chiefly that the feast of the Resurrection be celebrated everywhere on the same day. After long investigation, he yielded to the view of Proterius, the venerable patriarch of Alexandria. Writing to Marcian, he says: "It was not the force of the argument that made me decide as I did, but rather the desire for unity, which it is important to preserve." <sup>103</sup>

In the same spirit of peace he refrained from absolutely forbidding the faithful to observe the traditional celebration of certain holidays of the pagan epoch. But he endeavored to give a Christian meaning to those celebrations to which the people were still attached. The most curious of these transformations was that of the feast of the "collections." It originated as follows. Every year, from July 5 to 13, during the celebration of the *Ludi apollinares*, collections were taken up among the people to defray the expenses of the public games. The Christians had gradually changed the purpose for which these collections were used. The amount gathered in was distributed to the poor. St. Leo, in his sermons, often recommended the feast of the Collections; its date was kept in the period when the ancient pagan feast used to be celebrated.

The great Pope neglected no opportunity to associate the memory of the Apostles Peter and Paul with the memory of the true glories of old Rome. As the pillage of Rome by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Letter 137, no. 1. On the precise point of the discussion, see Régnier, Saint Léon le Grand, pp. 173-179.

<sup>104</sup> Some writers, exaggerating the bearing of these and similar facts, declare that "the saints were the successors of the gods." An historian whose eminent competence and critical strictness are beyond question, the Bollandist, Father Delehaye, thus concludes his scholarly work, *Les Origines du culte des martyrs:* "We are entitled to conclude that paganism had no appreciable influence upon the forming of the object of the cult of the saints."

bands of Genseric in 455 stopped on June 29, the feast of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, which was celebrated on that day, took on greater splendor. A few years later, Leo, complaining that the people were neglecting to honor the two patrons of Rome, said to them: "This forgetfulness fills me with sadness and fear. . . . Was it the circus entertainments that saved you from death by the sword? Was it not rather the intercession of the holy Apostles?" 105

What connection is there between Pope St. Leo and the composition of the celebrated Leonian Sacramentary, which is the oldest form of the Roman Missal? Duchesne's opinion is that it was not written before the middle of the sixth century.106 Probst and Batiffol, however, maintain the more widely accepted view assigning the date of the work to the fifth century. 107 As a result of prolonged discussions on the subject, it seems probable that the Leonian Sacramentary was not an official work of the Roman Pontiffs, but a private collection made up mostly of masses and other documents emanating from Pope St. Leo. This view is strengthened by the following facts: in most of the documents we find the cursus special to St. Leo, several allusions to things that preoccupied this pope (such as the sack of Rome, and the Eutychian, Nestorian, Manichaean, and Pelagian heresies), and the attributing of the Sacramentary to St. Leo the Great by a constant tradition.

The desire to see the beauty of the liturgical offices develop led Leo the Great to restore and even construct several churches, despite the menace of invasions. The restorations he made in the basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul alone would be enough to glorify his name in the history of Christian art. 108

<sup>105</sup> Sermon 84.

<sup>106</sup> Duchesne, Christian Worship, pp. 137-139.

<sup>107</sup> Batiffol, L'Eucharistie (5th ed.), p. 355.

<sup>108</sup> On these works, see Grisar, History of Rome, II, 72-77, 103 ff.

St. Leo the Great died (November 10, 461) after a pontificate of twenty-one years.

"He was the first pope to be buried on the threshold of the apostolic shrine, a spot which became a favorite one with his successors. As Pope Sergius I observes in an epitaph of thanksgiving, it was fitting that Leo, one of the greatest of the successors of Peter, should, even in death, mount guard over the stronghold of the Prince of the Apostles." <sup>109</sup>

# Pope St. Hilary

To take the place of the great Leo, one man was marked out by his services to the Church, by his courage and coolness at the Robber Council of Ephesus, and by the strictness of his life. It was the deacon Hilary. He was enthroned November 12, 461, at the very time that the Empire was presenting the spectacle of another brigandage. The tragic death of Valentinian III (March 16, 455) and the seizure of his widow and his two daughters at Carthage; the marriage of Princess Eudoxia to the barbarian king Humeric, mingling the blood of the great Theodosius with that of the Vandal kings; the anarchy in the army after the death of Aetius; the misery and desolation in Rome since the sack of Genseric; the acclaim in Gaul of the Arvenian Avitus, who was soon defeated and dethroned by the Suevian Ricimer; the latter's dominating sway in Italy under Majorian and Severus, although he dared not assume the title of king or emperor, yet by his role foreshadowed the great transformation that would take place four years after his death; all these events betokened the most lamentable and irremediable ruin for the Western Empire.

Hilary, faithful to the traditions of his predecessors, at the

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., II, 62. See St. Leo the Great's epitaph in De Rossi, Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae, vol. II, part 1, pp. 56, 98, etc.; Duchesne, Liber pontificalis, I, 379.

very hour when the power of imperial Rome was crumbling, engaged in raising the prestige of Christian Rome and in rallying the Churches of the West and of the East to this center of Catholic unity. Inscriptions and monuments—some still surviving—recall the great works he carried out in the Eternal City. Such are the beautiful chapels he erected at St. John Lateran's; the cloister, library, and hospice he built near the Church of St. Lawrence-outside-the-walls for the use of pilgrims; the two great monasteries erected with his encouragement, one near St. Lawrence's Church, the other in some undetermined part of the city; his bounteous generosity to the sacristies and treasuries of various basilicas in the way of goldsmith's and silversmith's work.

"We have here a page from the history of Roman art, which not only invites us to picture to ourselves all these treasures, but also shows the well-nigh inexhaustible wealth which found its way, at that time, into the coffers of the Roman Church and which was due to the munificence of the great senatorial families, and occasionally of the Court." <sup>110</sup>

Instinctively these great families made use of the fortunes that had accumulated in their hands in favor, not of public State institutions that were about to tumble down, but of the sole power in which an immortal survival could be expected.

"That the revival of art in the decoration of religious buildings went hand in hand with a genuine revival of religious feeling, seems evident from the statements in the *Liber pontificalis* regarding the Stations. Hilary paid special attention to this ancient religious practice in Rome. The Lateran Basilica and the Church of Our Lady on the Esquiline, appear to have been liturgical centers of the Station processions." <sup>111</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Grisar, op. cit., II, 84.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., II, 83. Cf. Liber pontificalis, I, 242-248.

Increasing the splendor of Christian Rome was not all. In the midst of the political disturbances that desolated the West and in view of those that could be foreseen, it was more than ever important to keep the various different Churches strongly attached to the center of Christendom. Hilary accomplished this by intervening directly in several disputes which were dividing them and by convening councils for this purpose.

In 462 Rusticus, the archbishop of Narbonne, was denounced to the Pope for having designated his archdeacon Hermes as his successor. Such designations were declared null by the canons. Hilary commissioned Leontius of Arles, the primate of Gaul, to send him a report on the affair. 112 Then a Roman Council (November 19, 462), attended by Faustus of Riez and Auxanius of Aix-en-Provence, regulated the affair by a gentle and peaceful decision. The elevation of Hermes to the see of Narbonne was confirmed, because his predecessor had not really instituted him, but merely recommended him. But Hermes, in punishment for the irregularities marring his election, was deprived of the right to ordain other bishops. This same Roman Council issued various general decisions regarding the Churches of Gaul, among others a decree ordering annual meetings of great councils of the different provinces under the presidency of the archbishop of Arles. The most difficult questions, however, would be referred to Rome. 113 In 463 the Pope again intervened in the affairs of the Churches of Gaul, this time to settle a dispute between the archbishops of Arles and Vienne. 114

# Council of Rome (465)

Soon after this, Pope Hilary had to take a hand in the affairs of the Churches of Spain, where similar conflicts had

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Mansi, VII, 933; Jaffé, no. 554.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Mansi, VII, 934 f.; Jaffé, no. 556.

<sup>114</sup> Mansi, VII, 936, 951; Jaffé, no. 557.

arisen. To settle them, he held a council of forty-eight bishops at Rome in November 465. Five disciplinary canons were adopted. The two principal ones were the following: "Canon I: In the matter of ordinations, the prescriptions of the divine laws and the ordinances of Nicaea must be exactly observed. Canon 5: In Spain, some think that a bishopric can be inherited like any other property; and in that country many bishops desire, on their deathbed, to choose their successor, so that it is not possible to hold an election; this way of acting is altogether irregular." <sup>115</sup>

Pope Hilary, whom the Church would honor as a saint, died February 29, 468, after governing the Catholic world for six years, three months, and ten days.<sup>116</sup>

## Pope St. Simplicius

He was succeeded, in the see of Peter, by the priest Simplicius, a native of Tibur (Tivoli), who governed the Church for fifteen years and seven days. The statement regarding him in the *Liber pontificalis* is vague and obscure, and there are gaps in the account. It bears trace of the disturbances at the time. Under Simplicius' lengthy pontificate, the Western Roman Empire was writhing in the last convulsions of its death agony. The condition of the Eastern Empire was politically more stable, but no less disquieting from the religious point of view. At Constantinople, schism and heresy were triumphant.<sup>117</sup> Under the usurper Basilicus, Timothy Aelurus was able to recover the see of Alexandria and there establish Monophysitism so strongly that after his death the patriarchal office passed to his friend Peter Mongus without any disturb-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> Mansi, VII, 959-964. In that same year (465), a council was held at Vannes in Brittany. In sixteen canons it regulated or renewed a number of points of discipline regarding the life of clerics, monks, and laymen. See Hefele, IV, 16 f.

<sup>116</sup> Liber pontificalis, I, 247 note.

<sup>117</sup> Grisar, op. cit., II, 68 and passim.

ance. The see of St. Mark seemed to be definitely won by heresy. At this same period another heretic, Peter the Fuller, installed himself at Antioch in the see of the Apostle St. Peter. Both of them were backed by the imperial power. A decree of Basilicus condemned to the flames the letter from St. Leo to Flavian and the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon. Five hundred bishops, belonging to the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, subscribed to the imperial decree. To the calamity of the West, lost to civilization, was added the calamity of the East, lost to the orthodox faith.

Against these two dangers Simplicius strove persistently. Following the example of his two predecessors, he first added to the restorations and building of churches in Rome and gave an impulse to the liturgical life. In the three basilicas of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Lawrence, he instituted a complete weekly service and, for the carrying out of this service, he fixed upon a system of rotation so well planned that it lasted until the heart of the Middle Ages.<sup>118</sup>

In the East, Simplicius forcefully withstood the powers evoked by a despotic State and a submissive episcopacy. Under Basilicus he succeeded in withdrawing the clergy and monasteries of Constantinople from the schism and arousing them to resistance. After the fall of the usurper and Emperor Zeno's enthronement, Simplicius saw the ecclesiastical hierarchy reëstablished. Timothy Aelurus and Peter the Fuller had to quit the sees they had usurped. True, this victory did not last long. The scheming Acacius of Constantinople soon won the favor of Zeno and, under the protection of the imperial authority, organized another schism.

At this point, August 23, 476, the chief of a Danubian tribe, Odoacer, who for several years had been the real ruler of Rome and Italy, thought the moment was at hand to suppress,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Liber pontificalis, I, 250 f., note 5. Cf. Acta sanctorum, June, VII, 49, no. 134. <sup>119</sup> Jaffé, no. 664.

in the person of the last emperor, a child named Romulus Augustulus, a title henceforth useless. He spared the life of the prince, but sent him, with a pension of 6000 crowns in gold, to end his years in Campania, in the country house of Lucullus. The Western Empire no longer existed.

To the eyes of anyone who took account only of outward forces, the situation of the Catholic Church must have appeared desperate. The Western Roman Empire, since the days of Constantine, had sustained it, and the Empire's framework and institutions had greatly aided it; but that Empire was dead. The Eastern Empire, without the power of Rome to offset it, seemed to be permanently won over to schism. But a more searching examination of the situation must have brought confident hope to the soul of the intrepid pontiff then guiding the Church. Neither the work of the popes, who had labored so perseveringly to gather the barbarian Church about the See of Peter, nor the work of the Fathers, who had, in their strife against error, built up the great synthesis of Catholic doctrine, was seriously shaken. In the might of her powerful hierarchy and a dogma now defined in its essential lines, the Church could confidently face the dangers of the new times.

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